



Arthule fies



A Picture of Colonial Slavery,

In the Year 1828,

ADDRESSED ESPECIALLY TO THE

LADIES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.—Eccl. iv. 1.

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works?—Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

THE inhumanity and impolicy, the cruelty and injustice of that system of slavery which prevails in the Colonies of Great Britain are now known and admitted. Its utter irreconcilableness with both the spirit and the precepts of Christianity follows as a matter of course. Without resorting, in proof of this view of it, to the history of that traffic which gave it birth, it will be sufficient to contemplate the actual condition of our wretched fellow subjects who are still in bondage. It cannot now be necessary, after all that has been written on the subject.* to enter at any length into an exposition of their state. For the present purpose, the evils under which they labour may be, in some degree, though still inadequately, appreciated, by considering the remedial measures which, five years ago, when those evils were fully exposed to the eye of the national conscience, the Government and the Parliament of this country, concurred in proposing and recommending to the immediate adoption of the Colonial authorities, with a view to the early and effectual elevation of the slaves, to the possession and enjoyment of their just rights and privileges as British subjects.

To these measures when first proposed, no objection was made by the West Indians in Parliament. The resistance made to them came from the Colonies. But the acquiescence of the one, and the resistance of the other, tended alike to prove the reality of the evils for which a remedy was thus sought, a remedy, however, which fell far short of the

exigency of the case.

The measures proposed were, in substance, the following, viz.

1. That means for the education and religious instruction of the slaves, which had hitherto been withheld from them, should now be provided.

2. That the Sunday, hitherto used for marketing, and for labour in their provision grounds, should be made a day of rest and religious observance, and that other equivalent time should be given for the purposes to which Sunday had hitherto been applied.

^{*} A list of the publications which may be advantageously referred to, on each distinct branch of this large subject, will be found at the close of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 32, p. 175. The successive Numbers of that Work are particularly recommended to the attention of all who feel an interest in this question.

3. That the evidence of slaves, which had hitherto been admitted only against each other, and the rejection of which, in the case of free persons, had hitherto shut them out from the protection of law, even when most cruelly oppressed, should be received in both civil and criminal cases.

4. That instead of their previous habits of unauthorized concubinage, and unrestrained licentiousness, (fostered by the too general example of their superiors) the marriage tie, and with it the hitherto unknown

blessings of domestic life should be introduced among them.

5. That husbands and wives, parents and children, should no longer be liable, as heretofore, to be torn from each other, and sold separately like cattle, without any regard to the endearing relations which were thus burst asunder.

6. That the slaves, who had hitherto possessed no legal rights of property, should, in acquiring, enjoying and transmitting it, be amply

protected by law.

7. That they should have a right to employ their little savings from the fruits of their industry, in forming a fund, by which to redeem, at a fair appraisement, themselves or their children, from an otherwise

hopeless and interminable bondage.

8. That masters and their delegates should be so far restrained in inflicting arbitrary punishment, as to inflict it only in the presence of a *free* witness, and to be bound to keep a record both of the alleged offence, and of the number of lacerations of the cart-whip, with which, at their own caprice, without judge or jury, examination or trial, they might choose to visit such offence.

9. That the women slaves, who had hitherto been subjected to the same shameful exposure of their bodies, and the same lacerations of the merciless cart-whip as the men, should no longer be liable to that barbarity, but should be punished in some less revolting way.

10. That the murderous practice, hitherto universally prevalent in the Colonies, of urging forward at their work the slaves, of both sexes, and of whatever age, by the lash of the cart-whip in the hands of a driver, just as a team of cattle is urged forward in this country, should be abolished*.

11. That officers, under the name of Protectors, should be specially appointed by the King to superintend and enforce these various reforms; and that not only these Protectors, but other public functionaries, as Governors, Judges, and Attorneys-General, should be debarred from

possessing slaves, or being interested in slave property.

12. That the black or brown tinge of the skin should not be such presumptive proof of a person's servile condition, as to subject him to be sold into perpetual slavery, for the profit of the state, if he cannot legally shew that he is free.

^{*} In the recommendations of Government nothing has been hitherto said of the unequalled continuity of uncompensated labour which is enforced by this cruel system of coercion. And yet, considering the climate, this is, perhaps, the most grievous of all the existing oppressions. For about five months of the year—during crop—eighteen hours' labour, at the least, are extracted, by the power of the cart-whip, from men and women alike,—and at other times the labour in the field alone, under a tropical sun, amounts, by law, to eleven hours and a half each day, to which two or three hours more must be added for other indispensable occupations.

Is it necessary to say one word, to convince British men and women, that the state of society, implied in the bare proposition of reforms such as these, (and that too as a first step and necessary preliminary to effective improvement,) is a state utterly at variance with every principle of Christianity, and that to tolerate, and still more to uphold it, is a violation of our Christian duty? But do we not, in fact, tolerate it, if we make no active efforts to obtain its extinction? Do we not, in fact, uphold it, if we continue to consume the produce which the lash extracts from these unhappy slaves, and even to protect that produce against the competition of free labour, a course of proceeding which

tends greatly to aggravate their sufferings?*

In order to form a clearer conception of this whole subject, let us bring the case, if we can, home to ourselves. Let us suppose that the principality of Wales was placed in circumstances precisely similar to those of our slave Colonies .- Let us suppose that the mass of its population was the absolute property of a few great landholders and manufacturers, who could sell them at pleasure as they sell the horses and cows bred on their estates; -that these Welch slaves, female as well as male, young as well as old, were made to toil without wages, the whole year round, for the owner's profit; -that Sundays only and a few days beside being allowed them wherein to procure the food required to sustain themselves and their families, Sunday also being their only market day, they were thus deprived, not only of the repose, but of all the religious benefits of a Sabbath; -and that besides being thus cruelly and impiously debarred from adequate opportunities of education or religious instruction, they were permitted to live together as the beasts that perish, unrestrained by the obligations of the connubial tie, and strangers to all the sweet charities of domestic life. Let us further suppose that they were compelled to perform their work, men and women, like cattle, and under the same coercion with the cattle, namely, the fear or the actual smart of the cart-whip; -that (to say nothing of difference of climate) their intense and uncompensated labour, thus extracted from them, was prolonged, for five months, during eighteen, and, for the remainder of the year, during fourteen or fifteen hours of the day; -and that every landholder or manufacturer, as well as every agent, bailiff, overseer, or foreman, might not only compel them thus to toil unceasingly under pain of the lash; but might, at his own discretion, for any offence, real or imaginary, cause to be stripped naked any men, women, or children placed under him, might inflict upon their bared bodies a certain number of lacerations of the cart-whip, and might then subject the sufferers, with their bleeding wounds, to confinement in the stocks, and hard labour at pleasure. Let us moreover suppose that all of them were debarred, by law, from giving evidence in the case of any abuse of power committed by their owners, and yet, if they failed in proving the truth of their complaints before any one of these owners acting as a magistrate, (that magistrate himself being liable to be complained against in the same way before a brother magistrate) that they might be punished with farther lacerations

^{*} For a full elucidation of this important part of the question, see the Anti-Slavery Society's Second Report, Anti-Slavery Reporter, Nos. 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 31, 35, &c. &c.; and Mr. Cropper's various Tracts.

for the very act of complaining;—that whatever property they might by any means acquire was not by law their own, but wholly in the power of their masters;—that they had no right, by any payment, to redeem themselves or their children from this cruel state of servitude;—and lastly, that their numbers were daily wasting under the operation of these various evils.—

Now, let us, if we can, contemplate the existence of such a state of things as this in a portion of our own island;—could we, it is confidently asked, reconcile it to our consciences to endure it for a single day? And yet after all, the picture now drawn, revolting as it is, represents but feebly and inadequately the evils of colonial bondage.

But let us farther suppose that some benevolent persons, deeply affected with the cruel and brutalizing effects of such a system, should propose to raise the people of Wales from their degraded condition to a participation of the rights and privileges enjoyed by other classes of His Majesty's subjects; and that the Welch landholders and manufacturers, with their agents, bailiffs, overseers, and foremen, were to join in one cry against such a proposal, and should din our ears with representations of their own humanity, and of the superlative happiness of their labourers; assuring us that they were fat, and sleek, and merry; well fed, and clothed, and lodged; far better off than the wretched peasantry in other parts of Great Britain who had no kind masters to look after them;—should we listen for a moment to such statements, and should we not reject with instant and unqualified reprobation every such plea for continuing such a system? Should we not say, "It is impossible such power should not be abused, and we cannot allow it to continue. Say what you will, we will not permit you to retain in your hands for an hour longer such tremendous means of arbitrarily inflicting misery on your fellow subjects." And who will dare to say that the same language may not be justly addressed to the planters, and overseers, and drivers of Jamaica, and the other Colonies?

But to make the parallel still more complete, we must further suppose our Welch slave owners to insist on having the corn grown on their lands, by means of the hoe in the hands of their whip-galled slaves, protected by a high duty on all corn grown elsewhere, by means of the plough in the hands of freemen; and that the only good reason to be given for this demand, was, that it was necessary to enable them to defray the additional expense they incurred, not only by living in London and buying seats in Parliament, but for overseers and slave drivers, and stocks, and whips, and above all for the loss of life caused by so unnatural and monstrous a system of exaction and oppression. In such a case, could terms be found strong enough to express the indignation and scorn with which we should repel so outrageous and insolent a requisition?

But it will be asked, Have the colonial authorities done nothing towards carrying into effect the humane and moderate propositions of the Government? The answer to this question is, that some of the measures have been *imposed*, by Orders in Council, on the Colonies subject to the legislation of the Crown, though even there the object of them has been frustrated by the omission of other regulations indispensable to their efficiency. In the Colonies, however, having legislatures of their own, it may be truly said that nothing effectual has been done.

These papers are printed on one sheet, and the whole, if not cut open, will be chargeable with single postage only, and may be sent in the form of a letter, when writing to any one either upon this or any other subject.

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of spreading information.* No visitors or collectors of the Ladies' Associations should, however, be expected to make any calls in furtherance of their object where they have reason to suppose they would not be well received.

It need scarcely be recommended that those who take an active part in these proceedings, should endeavour to make the meetings as interesting and encouraging as possible, by reading communications, &c. respecting the progress of the cause. The collectors should be encouraged to bring forward every objection that has been made to the proceedings of the Society, and which they may not have been able to answer.

To be prepared for such objections, every Society should be fur-

nished with at least one copy each of

Negro Slavery—Clarkson's Thoughts—Wilberforce's Appeal— Stephen's Delineation, and England enslaved by its own Colonies-Townsend's Sermons-Reports of the Society, particularly the Second, with Appendix-Hodgson's Letter to Say, showing the superiority of free Labour-Short review of Slave Trade and Slavery, showing also the means of their removal by the competition of free labour-East and West India Sugar-Anti-Slavery Reporter, Nos. 1 to 24, bound-and also with a considerable number of copies for distribution of Reporters, Nos. 5, 16, and 20, which give an account of the actual state of Slavery-Nos. 17 and 22, which shew the importance of free trade, &c.-19, which relates to the statistics of the Colonies, and 21, 26, 28, 29, and 30, which give an account of recent transactions in the Colonies; as well as with copies of Impolicy of Slavery, Extracts from the Letter to W. W. Whitmore, showing that sugar is not cultivated by slaves in the East Indies—Jamaica Gazettes, Shooting Excursion, Paper on the East India trade, Riland's Memoirs of a Planter; and an Evening at Home, which is a short but well written, interesting, and comprehensive, yet familiar view of the whole subject. The advantages of the substitution of East India sugar are stated in the paper entitled West India Sugar, which should be very generally distributed.

It will be very important that some of the Committee endeavour to make themselves well acquainted with the whole subject, by reading these and other works, so as to be ready to answer any objections; but in the meantime some of the most popular objections may be stated. One of these is, that if you leave off the use of sugar, you will lessen the employment of the slaves, and they will be in distress for want of work. This, it must be admitted, would be a new sort of distress for Slaves, and one that would not, and could not, last long, as it would directly lead to emancipation. Slaves are not employed in manufactures but agriculture, for this plain reason—their work cannot stand the competition of free labour.

^{*} The cost of the Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter varies according to its size, but on an average it has only been is per year: if every subscriber of 5s. or 2s. 6d. per year was regularly supplied with a Reporter, the funds of the society would still be materially benefited.

Slavery can only exist where people are scarce; manufactures where they are abundant. Can we imagine, then, such a thing as distress from want of employment, to people who obtain their own subsistence by cultivating the ground? On this subject see the fifth paragraph of the second column of page 3, of the Second Report (in a sheet) of the Anti-Slavery Society, and the whole of the preceding columns in that Report.

Another objection is that East India sugar is also cultivated by Slaves. This, however, is not the fact, and may be disproved by the very nature of the case. Men are so numerous in the East Indies, that wages are very low, as they are in Ireland; the labour of a man in either country may be had for the smallest sum which will maintain him, and thus all motive for holding men in slavery is destroyed. But for the facts, the extracts from the Letter to W. W. Whitmore

may be referred to.

Some will say that the slaves should not be made free until they are fitted for it by education and religious instruction. We may form some idea how this would be received by the planters, from the language of the people of Trinidad; (see first paragraph of the second report of the Anti-Slavery Society.) "Changes," they say, "are always to be deprecated, especially in a slave colony, where the whole of the labouring population are deprived of their natural rights; and nothing but the force of habit, and a brutish indistinct idea of the superiority and fixed power of their masters, keep them in awe and subjection." How then can we expect these masters to co-operate in removing these brutish indistinct ideas, which they say alone hold them in subjection?

Education, even if their masters were willing to allow their Slaves to be educated, would be attended with great difficulty and expense. But there is no hope that the masters generally, will cordially pro-

mote the education of their Slaves.

If, therefore, education is to precede emancipation, that must be deferred for ages to come. But on what foundation does the opinion rest that education must precede freedom? Have we any one proof that it has done so any where, and is not all history opposed to it? That education and religious instruction must be a great benefit to man, any where and in any state, or that the relief of suffering humanity in any shape is a Christian duty, cannot be denied, and such objects ought to be zealously encouraged. But if we recommend the instruction of the ignorant, and the relief and alleviation of their distress, as a means to precede, or to supersede our efforts for the removal of the cause, thus calling the public attention from the great fundamental evil itself, to the partial alleviation of the distress which it occasions, we shall do harm instead of good. While we do all in our power to alleviate existing hardships, let us strenuously and perseveringly combine to effect, at the earliest possible period the complete eradication of the grand master evil, which is their prolific source.

THE FOLLOWING PLAN OF A LADIES ASSOCIATION,

Is taken from that of the Association for Liverpool and its Neighbourhood, in aid of the cause of Negro Emancipation.

AT a meeting of Ladies held in Liverpool,

the following Resolutions were proposed and agreed to:-

1st.—That the Ladies present form themselves into a Society for aiding the cause of Negro Emancipation, and for procuring the protection of the British Laws, for all the African race who are living under British Dominion; and who, in 1828, are still permitted, by enlightened Christian Britain, to taste of whatever is most painful in the bitter cup of slavery.

2nd.—That all Ladies subscribing from five to twelve shillings and upwards yearly, be members of this Association, and that those who obtain subscriptions from others, be entitled to receive, monthly, one copy of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, and other useful publica-

tions, occasionally.

3rd.—That the business of this Society be conducted by a Treasurer, Secretaries, and a Committee, five of whom shall be competent to act, and that the Treasurer and Secretaries be members of the

Committee in virtue of their office.

4th.—That the Committee shall meet, except in June, July, August, and September, on the second Wednesday in the month, at 12 o'clock, in the Bible Depository, Slater Street; and that there be an Annual Meeting of this Society, when the accounts shall be presented, the proceedings of the last year reported, and the Treasurer, Secretaries, and Committee chosen for the ensuing year.

5th.—That the members of this Society be requested to encourage, by their example, as well as by their influence, the use of the pro-

duce of free labour, in preference to that of slave labour.

6th.—That it be the special business of the Committee to disseminate authentic information respecting the nature and baneful effects of the present system of Slavery prevailing in our West India Colonies, and that they are authorised (subject to the approval of a General Meeting) to adopt such further measures as shall appear to them to be calculated to forward the objects of this Institution.

7th.—That this Society propose to continue its exertions in aid of the cause of Negro Emancipation, till the time may come when the unhappy children of Africa shall no longer be treated as beasts; no longer be bought and sold, and branded like cattle;—when the torturing and degrading cart-whip shall no longer fall on the persons of helpless Negro Slaves; and when every Negro mother living under British Government, shall press a free-born infant to her bosom.

8th.—That every lady be earnestly requested not only to read, but to lend the papers she receives, to her subscribers, in preference to giving them, and that such ladies give the names and residences of their subscribers and donors in writing, to the Secretaries at the monthly meetings, that they may be inserted in a book opened for that purpose.

9th.—That the funds of this Society be applied to the circulation of information; that such a portion of our funds as is necessary to keep up a supply of Anti-Slavery Reporters, and other useful Pamphlets, be so appropriated, and the surplus sent to the Anti-Slavery Society, London.

By these legislatures, most of the proposed measures have been wholly rejected. And even where there has been a show of compliance, the compliance has been evasive, and nearly useless to any purpose of good. It would be impossible to go into details on this subject without far exceeding the limits assigned to this Address; nor is it necessary. The various publications of the Anti-Slavery Society have already demonstrated, from the official documents laid on the table of Parliament, that, in almost every instance, the colonial legislatures have resisted or eluded the wishes of this country; and that in Jamaica, the largest of the Colonies, they have even attempted, though unsuccessfully, to obstruct, still more than before, the labours of Missionaries, and thus to abridge the scanty means of religious instruction which by means of such Missionaries the slaves previously enjoyed.*

And while the Colonists are thus resisting the solicitations of Government and the wishes of the people, we not only annually incur an enormous expense on account of the civil and military establishments required for the defence and maintenance of this system, in other words for the defence of the oppressors against the oppressed; but we grant to them exclusive privileges, which are attended both with heavy additional burdens upon this country, and with immense disadvantages to other parts of the British empire, and which have the further effect of contributing to perpetuate and to aggravate the evils of

slavery.

And will the people of Great Britain acquiesce in the prolongation of this impolitic, iniquitous and unchristian state of things? Will they continue even actively to uphold a bondage which so daringly violates the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, and is far more terrible in its nature and effects than that of Egypt? In either case will they not be participators in its guilt and infamy? Can those especially who are actively engaged in diffusing Christianity in heathen lands, quietly submit, with any semblance of consistency, to tolerate a system which is practically opposed to the truths they are endeavouring to promulgate, and which, by its flagrant enormities, presents the most serious obstacles to the success of their exertions? We are surely called upon alike by sound policy and Christian principle, to do all in our power to remove this stain from our national character, and to free ourselves from the awful responsibility that must attach to us, if, by our supineness, we permit an evil to exist which, by our active interference, we may have it in our power to mitigate or remove.

But in what way or by what means, it may be said, can this be accomplished? It would be best accomplished, without doubt, by the direct interposition of Parliament,—by means of its effective enactments, enforcing its own recommendations, and redeeming its own pledges, and abolishing all the exclusive privileges granted to the owners of slaves. But still much may be done even with a view to that result, by individual exertion, and still more by Associations for the mitigation and extinction of slavery. The object appears to be particularly worthy of the attention of the female sex, and to have peculiar claims

^{*} See Slave Colonies of Great Britain—also Anti-Slavery Reporter, Nos. 11, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 38, 39, &c.

on their best sympathies. Their susceptibilities naturally enlist them on the side of suffering humanity in all cases; but in the present case, where the cruelly degrading and demoralizing effects of slavery on the female character are so strongly marked, their cordial concurrence may be confidently expected. In pressing this subject farther upon them, many more words will be unnecessary: the following appeal, already employed on a similar occasion, may suffice, and with it this Address shall now conclude.

"We would remind every lady in the United Kingdom, that she has her own sphere of influence, in which she may usefully exert herself in this sacred cause: and the effect of that influence, (even if it were quietly and unobtrusively confined to the family circle, or to the immediate neighbourhood,) in awakening sympathy, in diffusing information, in imbuing the rising race with an abhorrence of slavery, and in giving a right direction to the voices of those on whom, under Providence, hang the destinies of the wretched slaves, is too well un-

derstood, to require to be dwelt upon.

"It is chiefly, however, by forming Associations among themselves, to promote the mitigation and extinction of Slavery, that they will most effectually contribute to that end. The efficacy of such Associations in aiding the designs of benevolence, is well known; they are therefore most strenuously recommended. By means of such Associations, information may be prepared, printed, and diffused; subscriptions may be raised; Petitions to the Legislature, when necessary, may be promoted; the use of sugar, the growth of free labour, may be more effectually encouraged, while the use of that grown by slaves is discountenanced; and a variety of other expedients may be, from time to time, devised and executed, for exciting sympathy in favour of the wretched Negro, and for aiding in the early and entire abolition of slavery. In the progress of these efforts, new opportunities of usefulness may present themselves. In the mean time, however, they will find, in the zealous and uncompromising endeavour to put an end to the evil of slavery itself, undiverted from that pursuit by minor objects, a sufficiently large field of useful exertion. Upon that field they are invoked to enter, in the name of that blessed Saviour who has shed his blood alike for all the kindreds of the earth. Should they, for His sake, actively engage in this labour of Christian love, they cannot fail, whatever be the issue, to inherit 'the blessing of those who are ready to perish,' and the richer blessing of Him who declares that even a cup of cold water given in His name shall not lose its reward. Should their efforts succeed, they will exalt the true glory of the land, and aid in averting from it the displeasure of the Almighty. Should they fail, they will at least have the consolation of having done what they could, not only to redeem the character of their country from the foul stain, and the enormous guilt, of maintaining such a system, but to rescue themselves and their children from the awful consequences which must ever follow deliberate perseverance in a course of admitted crime."

LADIES'

Anti-Slavery Associations.

SINCE our expectations of legislative improvement in the condition of the Slaves, (as a preparative for ultimate emancipation) have been almost wholly disappointed, it becomes an object of increased importance to consider what we can do ourselves for its accomplishment. And it must be no small satisfaction to the friends of humanity to know that, notwithstanding the disappointment of their hopes from parliamentary proceedings, there are yet three ways by which the benevolent may attain their end, if they set seriously and determinately about the work.

1st. By spreading information more extensively respecting the enormities of Colonial Slavery. If this were done, and if all the friends of the cause would labour to expose and discountenance, in their intercourse in society, all palliatives for the continuance of this system of oppression which has scarcely a parallel in the most barbarous ages, such excuses would surely come to be received, in these enlightened days,

with disapprobation and abhorrence.

2nd. The impolicy of the system of Slavery is not less certain than its injustice and inhumanity; and pains should be taken to make it manifest, there being many, who, though too little concerned about its inhumanity, would not be indifferent to the vast expense and enormous sacrifices of maintaining it. Whilst bounties and protections in other cases have been exploded, they are retained for the support of Slavery and stand as a monument of our folly and injustice. They must soon yield, however, to a more general diffusion of knowledge on the subject. We have therefore the greatest encouragement to proceed in exhibiting their pernicious effect both on the commercial prosperity of the

empire and the well-being of the Slave.

3rd. By substituting the produce of Free for that of Slave labour. We may hope that more than one-tenth of the population would be willing to make some small temporary sacrifice for the accomplishment of so great an object as that of the Abolition of West India Slavery. If only this proportion would give up the use of sugar grown by slaves, and substitute that which is the produce of free labour, it would give such an impulse to the cultivation of the latter, that it would go on progressively increasing until it had superseded, by a cheaper article, the cultivation of sugar by slaves altogether, even if the protecting duties remained; but still more certainly if they were discontinued. Here, then, is a means by which the friends of emancipation may themselves in time put a period to Colonial slavery.

These three plans for the destruction of Slavery might be considerably promoted by the extension of the Ladies' Anti-Slavery Societies, were their object and plans more generally known. Their operations must be materially influenced by the circumstances of the different places where they are established. Where there is no opposing interest, and where zealous friends can be found who are both able and willing to give up their time to the object of visiting the people indiscriminately, the great work of diffusing information, obtaining subscriptions, and increasing the consumption of the produce of free labour, will be easily performed. But there are many places where, even if there were willing and able agents, so many Slave-holders or West India merchants reside as to have a considerable influence. It will be found in such places that numbers who, from the general benevolence of their characters, might be expected to be the warm advocates of suffering humanity in this case as they are in others, are rendered lukewarm, by having been led to imbibe erroneous notions of the state of Slavery, or of the plans and proceedings of the friends of negro emancipation. They find it difficult to believe that such respectable men, as those with whom they are intimate, could be engaged in a business to which such cruelty and injustice are attached, as are represented by the abolitionists. They therefore listen willingly to the statements of interested parties, who either believe whatever their Colonial agents may write to them, or if they know the facts themselves, are placed in this dilemma—either to acknowledge the existence of evils which they would be ashamed to sanction and especially to profit by; or positively to deny them. We cannot be surprised that many of the West Indians should have chosen the latter. Almost every statement made by the friends of humanity has been denied; and yet the truth of every one of them is proved, by the absolute refusal of the Colonists to make those practices illegal, of which they denied the existence: as, for instance, the use of the driving whip, the flogging of females, &c. &c. The benevolent persons of whom we are speaking have not distinguished between the system and the individuals who are, unfortunately for themselves, connected with it, and in many cases without their own choice. Others, viewing the system as it really is, and ever ought to be viewed, with all its deformities and horrors, have fallen into the contrary error, and have included in one common and unqualified condemnation, both the system and those connected with it,—whilst justice to them, and feelings of Christian charity, should make us examine ourselves, and consider how we might have acted had we been placed in their

Since by these circumstances, many humane and benevolent individuals have been kept from cordially uniting with us, our first endeavour ought to be to open the way for the removal of their prejudices. In this way a sure foundation will be laid on which to build future and more extended exertions, accompanied with the certainty of ultimate success.

The circulation of the Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter will be found one of the best means for the removal of these prejudices and

HOW DO WE PROCURE SUGAR?

A QUESTION

PROPOSED FOR THE

CONSIDERATION OF THE PEOPLE

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

Whithy:

PRINTED FOR THE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, BY R. KIRBY, BRIDGE-STREET,

AND REPRINTED IN LIVERPOOL BY E. SMITH AND CO.

The following Address was drawn up by an Officer of rank in the Navy, who was recently employed in one of our Slave Colonies; and, in laying it before the public, the Committee of the Whitby Anti-Slavery Society consider it necessary to say, that they believe the facts contained in it to be established by the most authentic testimony; that they fully concur in the inferences drawn from them, and cordially assent to the several propositions suggested.

The Committee cannot refrain from expressing their earnest wish that this appeal may be read with the attention which the subject deserves; and that all who value the privileges of Christianity, and the blessings of freedom, may be induced to exert themselves for the extinction of slavery, which the Planters and Slaveowners are making such strenuous efforts to perpetuate.

^{***} In page 6, near the bottom of the second paragraph, the price of the slave is stated to be about £85 for eight years, whereas, it should be £93 for eight years, or £83 for seven years.

HOW DO WE PROCURE SUGAR?

"What does your sugar cost?" is the title of a little tract, designed, by enlisting the feelings on the side of humanity, and by arousing the sympathies of our common nature, to awaken the people of this country to a sense of what is individually required of them, by the force of the precept, "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you," on behalf of the suffering slave population of our sugar colonies. In support of the same cause, I desire to appeal, not only to the heart, but to the head: bear with me, then, my friends, while I lay the matter plainly before you.

We procure sugar by the labour of slaves. About four years ago, the Government, urged by the numerous petitions presented to Parliament, and pressed by the specific motion proposed in the House of Commons, by Mr. Buxton, made known to the respective legislatures of the slave colonies, the expectation of the Parliament and people of Great Britain, that certain specific measures, which were detailed, should be adopted for the amelioration of the slaves, and for the gradual extinction of slavery. What has been the result? Rejection of the measures, and denial of the right of Parliament to interfere! What, then, remains for us to do? Let every one answer for himself, when he has read what follows.

The proposition, that slave labour is more expensive than that of freemen, has been denied; but it is now fully established by experiment and facts. "Surely, then," some one may exclaim, "the interest of the owner will induce him to adopt the measures which shall convert his slave into a freeman." So thought the men who procured the abolition of the slave trade; but they were deceived. If a bounty were paid upon goods manufactured by the worst kind of machinery, of equal amount to the difference of cost between them and the goods produced by the best machine, would there be any inducement to the adoption of the latter? Now, there is such a bounty upon slave labour, by the drawback paid upon the refined sugar exported, exceeding the duty upon its importation in the raw state; an excess which raises the price of all sugars in the market 3s. the cwt., and gives, therefore, to the sugar grower a higher profit than he would otherwise obtain. Consequently, he can afford to be wasteful in the mode of producing his crop; and he will be wasteful; for it is low profit which induces thrift. The quantity of sugar imported from our slave colonies is about forty times greater than that which comes

from India, which is the produce of freemen; and a duty of 10s. the cwt. is laid upon the latter, more than upon the former, of similar quality. Although, therefore, the sugar of India receives the benefit of the bounty in its increased price, when sold in the home market; yet the extra duty it has to pay, makes it more profitable if exported. Hence, there would be little of this sugar sold here, if it were not that many families use it for conscience' sake, as being one of the means whereby slavery is to be extinguished. Thus it is, by the bounty and discriminating duty on sugar, giving a monopoly of the market to that which is produced by slaves, that the ruinous system of slave labour is upheld; and the people of this country are compelled to pay more than they otherwise need do, for an article of such general use as sugar; whereby they are actually fostering and encouraging the state of

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The slaves in our West India colonies amount to about 720,000; and perhaps there are between 60 and 80,000 more in the island of Mauritius. In the former, the number has decreased between the years 1818 and 1824, at the average of about 4700 per annum, by deaths exceeding births; and at the average of about 1300 per annum, by manumissions. In the latter, the decrease would appear to have been at the rate of seven per cent. per annum. between the years 1819 and 1822. But as this destruction of life is so enormous, the manumissions being few, it is hoped there may be some mistake in the official returns. I would now ask, do we anywhere on the earth find a people whose numbers are annually dwindling away, except where they are the victims of oppression? When moderately fed, adequately clothed, and not overworked, men everywhere increase and multiply. The promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, which prevails in savage life, does not prevent them from maintaining their numbers. The conclusion, then, is inevitable, that our slaves are not sufficiently fed and clothed, and are too hard worked. It is in vain that the advocates of slavery assert the contrary; so powerful a law of nature cannot be counteracted by any less powerful or less general causes.

In some islands, each slave has a piece of ground, from which he is to raise his food; in others, the ground is wrought by gangs, for the benefit of the whole. Under both systems, a small quantity of food is provided by the owner, as well as some clothing. The food and clothing thus supplied are generally totally inadequate to the wants of the slave; and the time allowed for the cultivation of the provision-grounds is not sufficient to supply the deficiency. This time varies in the different islands, from 26 to 35 days in the year, exclusive of Sunday; but in the colony of Honduras, the slave is allowed one day in the week throughout the year, besides

Sunday.

Can it be doubted, that the most effectual way to benefit the slave, is that which shall diminish the demand for the produce of his labour? If, instead of importing 200,000 tons of sugar from the West Indies, we procured one-half from India, at an equal

duty, the price would fall, profits would fall, some of the land now growing sugar would not be wanted; and the planter would exert his ingenuity in devising the means of diminishing the cost of cultivation, as well as the expense of maintaining his slaves. He would, therefore, introduce machinery; the plough instead of the hoe;—he would substitute cattle for men. He might require, perhaps, half the number of slaves; but as the other half must be supported, he would continue to employ the whole, who would, therefore, have less to do than before. He would find it cheaper to discontinue the food and clothing hitherto supplied, and to give them more land, and more time to cultivate it; from which they would raise sufficient food and clothing, and be enabled to lay by a surplus for the purchase of their freedom.

Sunday, which the Almighty has hallowed as his sabbath, would not, as now, be employed either in going to and from market, or in labour and toil. Time that is of little value is easily given up; the day would, therefore, be devoted to religious instruction and religious duties. Hitherto, little progress has been made in educating slaves, and no wonder; before the mind can be cultivated, the body must have repose. So long as men continue in a state of physical suffering, labouring without the reward of their toil, so long will they remain in a state of moral debasement; and the attempt to enlighten their understandings will be futile: education and emancipation must go hand in hand.

But it may be asked what security we can have, that the slaves will thus employ the time given up to them? The best of all, (that which is of greater force and equal certainty with animal sagacity,) the desire of man to better his condition, when a reasonable prospect of doing so is afforded him. The free black and coloured people amount to above 90,000, in the West India colonies. They propagate almost as rapidly as man does anywhere; and few, very few, instances occur of their requiring relief. And how did these people procure their freedom? By voluntary toil; by which also they are rapidly increasing in numbers and in wealth.

A few years ago, it was maintained by the advocates of "things as they are," that the negro was of a different species from the white man; that he belonged to a lower race of beings. The idea was monstrous; but doctrines as monstrous have been promulgated and received. Now, it is urged, that the slave is not impelled by the same motives, nor susceptible of the same incentives, as the free man; and hence the conclusion is arrived at, that he who was born a slave, must continue in slavery. God has decreed respecting man,—"In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread;" but reason and nature, following that decree, demand that he shall be allowed to eat the bread he has earned by the sweat of his brow. Place the slave, then, in the condition to do this; and man as he is, he will act as man.

At the same time that the advocates of slavery proclaim the incurable indolence of the negro, from which he can be roused by no other stimulus than the lash, they tell us that the slaves abound in superfluities and luxuries, acquired by their voluntary labour on their provision-grounds; and they fear not to assert, that the comfort and happiness they enjoy is superior to that of the peasantry of England. The terms, comfort and happiness, thus employed, contain the bitterest irony. It were folly to combat such arguments, if the pertinacity with which they are reiterated, had not induced those to assent to them who will not think for themselves.

It is scarcely possible for any slave, now employed in fieldlabour, to raise a sufficient sum to purchase his freedom. Those who are artificers may; and, accordingly, we find very large sums given, by this description of slaves, for their freedom, or that of their children; amounting, in some instances, to three times the market price of a slave. The calculation of the price of manumission is the amount of the capital, which, at the usual rate of interest, would give a return equal to that annual sum for which the slave could be let out at hire. For instance, if the market rate of interest be six per cent. and if an artisan slave would produce to his owner £15 per annum, his price would be The unfairness of such a mode of calculated to be £250. valuation is apparent; for the market price must always be the real value; which will consist of the capital, from which is to flow the ordinary rate of interest, together with such further sum as shall replace the price in the average duration of the life of the slave. Thus, if the earnings of a slave be £15 per annum, and the period of his health and strength be about eight years, his price should be about £85, the rate of interest being six per cent. It appears, by official records, that the market price of slaves varies between £17 and £90, in the different colonies,

I now return to the question. "What are we to do?" To

which I reply:

1. Let us petition Parliament to withdraw the bounty on exported sugar, and to equalize the duty on all produce from the

East and West Indies.

2. Let us petition Parliament to pass a law, that Sunday markets shall be abolished in all our slave colonies, and another day substituted; and further, that time equivalent to one day in the week, throughout the year, may be given to the slaves, besides the market day, and exclusive of Sunday.

3. Let us petition Parliament, that the slaveowner may be compelled, by law, to enfranchise his slave, on receiving a tender

of his market price.

4. Until these things are done, let us abstain from the use of all West India and Mauritius produce, and purchase the sugar coffee, &c. of India instead.

Need I enumerate the advantages which would flow from the adoption of the first proposition? The public would buy their

sugar considerably cheaper; coffee, rum, &c. would also fall in price; while the export of our manufactures to India might be increased to an indefinite amount. West India produce having no longer the monopoly of the home market, necessity, the mother of invention, would force upon the slaveowner the adoption of measures to diminish the expense of raising his produce; and I have shown that these would consist with the welfare of the slaves; who, under more favourable treatment, would lose the habits and propensities that now degrade them, and would gain somewhat of the characteristics of freemen.

As, however, the best mode of management is not immediately found out, the adoption of the second proposition would make sure of the matter; while the adoption of the third would secure to the slave the benefit of his exertions. But as we have not the present means of enforcing these measures, and as, unfortunately, they may be long delayed, I would urge the instant adoption of the fourth proposition, which every one has in his own power. I urge it upon the score of religious principle, of humanity, of policy, of self-interest; and I feel persuaded that I shall not appeal in vain. Ignorance of the actual state of things has been the cause of slavery having been so long suffered to exist; that ignorance removed, he is without excuse who shall connive at its continuance. There is only one point, upon which a conscientious man may withhold his concurrence, and that is, the consideration that these measures may ruin the slaveowners. On this head, it is important to bear in mind, that they will be ruined under their present system. At the present rate of decrease, the day will soon arrive, when the number of slaves will be insufficient to cultivate the land now cultivated, the productiveness of which is every year diminishing.

A man can keep himself cheaper than he can be kept by any body else; and when men are multiplied, the competition of numbers increases the productiveness of the labourer, in a greater ratio than the cost of his maintenance increases; but this competition cannot take place under a system of slave-labour.

In the progress of mankind from savage life, by cultivation and commerce, to the state of civilized society, we find that land is plentiful and cheap, because men are scarce and dear; and land is scarce and dear, when men are plentiful. In the natural state of society, then, it is manifestly to the interest of the owner of land, that population should increase, and that the labourers should be freemen; for it is only under a system of free labour that the difference between the productiveness of labour and the cost of maintenance will be the greatest.

To those who, adopting these views, shall be desirous of assisting in their execution, it will afford satisfaction to see how soon they may effect the extinction of slavery. In the colony of Honduras, which has about 2,400 slaves, Saturday and Sunday are given up to the slave, which is from one-fourth to one-fifth more time than he-has in any other colony; and here the manumissions

proceed at the rate of about one per cent. per annum, which is one-third faster than the rate in any other colony, twenty times faster than the rate in two of them, and more than three times as fast as the aggregate rate in the West Indies collectively. These two days are, however, only half the time the slave ought to have; for Sunday is one of them, and it is the market day; but if he had double the time, we may infer that the rate of manumissions would be doubled. Moreover, in this colony, the price of a slave, when purchasing his freedom, is more than three times the market price; we may therefore infer, that if the law compelled his manumission at the market price, the manumissions would increase threefold. On both these accounts, we may assume, that if the proposed measures were adopted, the number of slaves who would annually purchase their freedom would be increased fivefold, a rate of increase which, if the population remained stationary, would extinguish slavery in twenty years; but as the improved condition, arising from more food and clothing and less work, would occasion an increase of the slave population, by the natural process, which we will assume at the rate at which the enfranchised blacks increase, viz. two per cent. per annum, we must calculate the effect of the manumissions in reducing the number of slaves at three per cent. per annum, which would free the whole race in little more than thirty-three years. This may, indeed, seem to many a very long period; but if effectual encouragement were given to marriage among the slaves; if their religious instruction were systematically and generally provided for; if the separation of families for sale were peremptorily prohibited, under all circumstances; if the property of slaves were legally secured to them, as well as the power of disposing of it as they please; if the evidence of slaves were received, quantum valeat, in courts of law,—I have no doubt but the period of the extinction of slavery would be brought much nearer: for, as the number of freemen increased, the value of slaves would decrease, and manumissions would proceed in an increasing ratio.

Now, when will slavery cease in our colonies, if things are allowed to go on as they have since the abolition of the slave trade? The average rate of manumissions is about one in four to five hundred per annum; the average rate of decrease, by deaths exceeding births, is about one in two hundred per annum, excluding Mauritius. These two causes will clear off the slave population in 120 years. And who is the principal performer in this process of emancipation?—Death! And does death make compensation for the victims he releases?—No; but the people of England do for him! What is the value of 4,700 slaves, at £50 a head?—£235,000. What is the amount of extra profit to the planters, arising from the increase of 3s. per cwt. to the price of sugar by the bounty?—about £500,000. Alas! the slaveowner would be remunerated, if death's victims were twofold.— Death's victims, do I say?—they are the victims offered upon the altar of Mammon; that altar which the rulers of England erected in days gone by, and which the people of England have laboured to support. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance

ye did it, as did also your rulers."

Countrymen and friends,—if these things be so, what remains for us to do? Have such passages as the following no meaning at the present day? or were they "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come?" "There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel." "And he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed." "And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" "For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy." "Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

But let us examine the question of compensation to the planters more narrowly. When a slave is enabled to purchase his freedom, a jury must assess his value; and that value will always be found in his market price, whatever it be, now and at all future time, as long as it is worth a planter's while to buy slaves. On this portion of his property the slaveowner will, therefore, receive full compensation, by the third proposition.

What compensation, then, is he to receive for the loss occasioned by the lessened demand for sugar, consequent upon the execution of the first proposition? None;—because, whether he raised sugar by freemen or by slaves, that measure ought to be adopted as one of sound general policy, which looks to the interest of the consumers, and not of the producers of a commodity. Now, it is the interest of the latter to sell as dear, and of the former to buy as cheap, as they can; and the competition of producers is the best and the only security for the consumers. But this competition the discriminating duties prevent. Who ever heard of compensation being given to the manufacturer, who, working with a clumsy machine, has his labour superseded and his profits brought to nought, by the contrivance of a better apparatus? What compensation did copyists receive when printing was invented? Need I strive to enumerate the almost innumerable similar cases which have occurred in our own day, which are continually occurring, and which must go on as long as the world lasts? Is the progress of society to be arrested, and are the laws of nature to be reversed, for the sake of the planters? The first proposition, which is good in principle, and expedient in practice, is only the more strengthened by its being the most powerful means of gradually abolishing slavery.

Let us see what will be the probable effect of the proposed measures upon the value of land, compared with the certain effect of things being allowed to go on at their present rate. In 120 years no slaves will be in existence in our West India colonies; the 90,000 free, black, and coloured people will have increased to 306,000; and their number will have been further increased by the annual manumissions to 462,000 free men. This will com-

prise the whole labouring population of the colonies.

Now, what would the population amount to in 33 years, under the state of things which we suppose to follow the adoption of the proposed measures? The 720,000 slaves, increasing at the rate of two per cent. per annum, would, in this period, amount to 1,195,200, and they would all be free men; to which is to be added, the increase of the 90,000 free blacks in the same period; and we have a population of 1,344,600 free labourers; and in 87

years more they would amount to 3,684,204.

According to the principle before laid down, under which of the circumstances as, to population, at the end either of 33 or 120 years, would land be of the most value? The every-day experience of every man suffices to show, that when labourers are numerous, the wages of labour are low; and the experience of ages shows, that as population increases, land rises in value. It is, therefore, clear, that, with the greater population, the cultivation of the colonies would be carried on cheaper; that the quantity of produce would be greater; and that the land would be of higher value. But, with the smaller population, it is very doubtful if sugar would be cultivated at all, and certainly not to the same extent as now; the wages of labour would be high, and the value of land low; the 477,500 free men would be chiefly small proprietors, whom no wages would tempt to labour for another; or artificers, whom nothing would tempt to till the earth; the cultivation of the soil would be principally for the purpose of raising food for its own population; and there would be few exports. Who does not see in this latter picture the ruin of the planters, or in the former, their prosperity?

Should there be no compensation, then, for the time the slaveowner is compelled, by the second proposition, to give up his slave? Yes, if the giving up that time causes a loss of property, which would be the case, if, under a free competition with free men, the slaves should not produce as much of sugar, or any other commodities, as there is a demand for. When the planter shall prove that he could sell more sugar at a profit, if he could produce more; and that the want of the time given up to the slave is the sole cause of his not producing more, he will then be

entitled to compensation.

For example, suppose that the effect of the first proposition should reduce the demand for West India sugar one-fourth, but that the effect of the second proposition should diminish the quantity produced one-third, we should have to make up to the

planters the value of the difference, or one-twelfth.

I am persuaded, however, that the slaves would, under their improved condition, and with brighter prospects before them, produce as much for their masters in four days, as they now do in six; they would, at least, produce as much as their masters would find a profit in the sale of. On this head, it is important to observe, that, by the laws of one of the islands, (St. Lucie) it is provided, that if a master shall allow his slave two days in the week out of crop, and a day and a half in crop, exclusive of Sunday, he need not give him any food; the slaves are, moreover, to be supplied with two shirts and two pair of trowsers for each male, and two shifts and two petticoats for each female, annually.

Now this proves, that the time named in the second proposition is not more than equivalent to the food and clothing which the planters themselves consider the slaves ought to have.

Recollect, that every particle of slave-produce consumed, rivets more strongly the fetters of the slave, binds him more firmly in that thraldom, which precludes his exercising the attributes of man, and keeps him in a state of ignorance of, and alienation from, God. Do you profess yourself a Christian? Does no monitor stir within you? Listen to the suggestions of conscience; approve yourself in the sight of all men the follower of Him who came "to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" who, enjoining his apostles freely to give, because freely they had received, requires of us also to be strenuous in assisting all men to procure those blessings which we ourselves enjoy.

Are you among the legislators of your country? Remember that you exercise this trust for the benefit of mankind, and to the glory of God. Beware how you obstruct the efficacy of the prayer which ascends weekly from the congregations of our church, petitioning the throne of grace that you may be endued "with grace, wisdom, and understanding." Have your opinions on this subject been taken from others? Deal fairly now with the evidence laid before you; follow the convictions of your reason; act upon your own judgment; do your part in causing "the provisions of the law to accord with the principles of

nature." The question you have to decide, is not as to the greater or less degree of comfort and happiness the slaves are to enjoy, but whether they are to live or to die;—"therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

Is your lot cast in the humbler walks of life? Take heed that you "follow not a multitude to do evil." It will be no excuse, when you stand before the judgment-seat of God, that you did only as others did. They, perhaps, are, as you were, ignorant of the condition of the slaves; but now, that you are instructed in the means of doing your duty, flinch not from it. Look around you, and count the blessings you possess, in the security of life and property, in the free exercise of your own will, in the communion and sympathy of your friends, in the endearments of home. By all you hold dear in this life, or hope for in the next, I adjure you to stand forth the uncompromising

champion of the wretched slaves. The voice of wisdom shall ascend from the public meeting to the Parliament House; though only uttered by few, it will, as the still small voice of conscience, overpower the cry of ignorance, prejudice, avarice, and passion; and slavery, that foul and festering sore in our constitution; that blot on the page of our history; that stain on our name and nation,—shall vanish before the breath of truth, as the earth shall melt away at the blast of the trump that shall summon to judgment all the kindreds of the earth.

M.

*** For further information on this subject, see "Stephen on West India Slavery;" "Adam Hodgson's letter to Say, on free and slave labour;" "Review of the Slave Trade and Slavery, published at Birmingham, 1827;" "Relief for West Indian Distress, by James Cropper;" "Support of Slavery investigated, by ditto;" "Annual Reports and Monthly Reporters of the Anti-Slavery Society."

Arthur Cappain

HOW DO WE PROCURE SUGAR?

A QUESTION

PROPOSED FOR THE

CONSIDERATION OF THE PEOPLE

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

Withitby:

PRINTED FOR THE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, BY R. KIRBY, BRIDGE-STREET,

AND REPRINTED IN LIVERPOOL BY E. SMITH AND CO.

The following Address was drawn up by an Officer of rank in the Navy, who was recently employed in one of our Slave Colonies; and, in laying it before the public, the Committee of the Whitby Anti-Slavery Society consider it necessary to say, that they believe the facts contained in it to be established by the most authentic testimony; that they fully concur in the inferences drawn from them, and cordially assent to the several propositions suggested.

The Committee cannot refrain from expressing their earnest wish that this appeal may be read with the attention which the subject deserves; and that all who value the privileges of Christianity, and the blessings of freedom, may be induced to exert themselves for the extinction of slavery, which the Planters and Slaveowners are making such strenuous efforts to perpetuate.

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duty, the price would fall, profits would fall, some of the land now growing sugar would not be wanted; and the planter would exert his ingenuity in devising the means of diminishing the cost of cultivation, as well as the expense of maintaining his slaves. He would, therefore, introduce machinery; the plough instead of the hoe;—he would substitute cattle for men. He might require, perhaps, half the number of slaves; but as the other half must be supported, he would continue to employ the whole, who would, therefore, have less to do than before. He would find it cheaper to discontinue the food and clothing hitherto supplied, and to give them more land, and more time to cultivate it; from which they would raise sufficient food and clothing, and be enabled to lay by a surplus for the purchase of their freedom.

Sunday, which the Almighty has hallowed as his sabbath, would not, as now, be employed either in going to and from market, or in labour and toil. Time that is of little value is easily given up; the day would, therefore, be devoted to religious instruction and religious duties. Hitherto, little progress has been made in educating slaves, and no wonder; before the mind can be cultivated, the body must have repose. So long as men continue in a state of physical suffering, labouring without the reward of their toil, so long will they remain in a state of moral debasement; and the attempt to enlighten their understandings will be futile: education and emancipation must go hand in hand.

But it may be asked what security we can have, that the slaves will thus employ the time given up to them? The best of all, (that which is of greater force and equal certainty with animal sagacity,) the desire of man to better his condition, when a reasonable prospect of doing so is afforded him. The free black and coloured people amount to above 90,000, in the West India colonies. They propagate almost as rapidly as man does anywhere; and few, very few, instances occur of their requiring relief. And how did these people procure their freedom? By voluntary toil; by which also they are rapidly increasing in numbers and in wealth.

A few years ago, it was maintained by the advocates of "things as they are," that the negro was of a different species from the white man; that he belonged to a lower race of beings. The idea was monstrous; but doctrines as monstrous have been promulgated and received. Now, it is urged, that the slave is not impelled by the same motives, nor susceptible of the same incentives, as the free man; and hence the conclusion is arrived at, that he who was born a slave, must continue in slavery. God has decreed respecting man,—"In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread;" but reason and nature, following that decree, demand that he shall be allowed to eat the bread he has earned by the sweat of his brow. Place the slave, then, in the condition to do this; and man as he is, he will act as man.

At the same time that the advocates of slavery proclaim the incurable indolence of the negro, from which he can be roused by no other stimulus than the lash, they tell us that the slaves abound in superfluities and luxuries, acquired by their voluntary labour on their provision-grounds; and they fear not to assert, that the comfort and happiness they enjoy is superior to that of the peasantry of England. The terms, comfort and happiness, thus employed, contain the bitterest irony. It were folly to combat such arguments, if the pertinacity with which they are reiterated, had not induced those to assent to them who will not think for themselves.

It is scarcely possible for any slave, now employed in fieldlabour, to raise a sufficient sum to purchase his freedom. Those who are artificers may; and, accordingly, we find very large sums given, by this description of slaves, for their freedom, or that of their children; amounting, in some instances, to three times the market price of a slave. The calculation of the price of manumission is the amount of the capital, which, at the usual rate of interest, would give a return equal to that annual sum for which the slave could be let out at hire. For instance, if the market rate of interest be six per cent. and if an artisan slave would produce to his owner £15 per annum, his price would be calculated to be £250. The unfairness of such a mode of valuation is apparent; for the market price must always be the real value; which will consist of the capital, from which is to flow the ordinary rate of interest, together with such further sum as shall replace the price in the average duration of the life of the slave. Thus, if the earnings of a slave be £15 per annum, and the period of his health and strength be about eight years, his price should be about £85, the rate of interest being six per cent. It appears, by official records, that the market price of slaves varies between £17 and £90, in the different colonies,

I now return to the question. "What are we to do?" To

which I reply:

1. Let us petition Parliament to withdraw the bounty on exported sugar, and to equalize the duty on all produce from the East and West Indies.

2. Let us petition Parliament to pass a law, that Sunday markets shall be abolished in all our slave colonies, and another day substituted; and further, that time equivalent to one day in the week, throughout the year, may be given to the slaves, besides the market day, and exclusive of Sunday.

3. Let us petition Parliament, that the slaveowner may be compelled, by law, to enfranchise his slave, on receiving a tender

of his market price.

4. Until these things are done, let us abstain from the use of all West India and Mauritius produce, and purchase the sugar coffee, &c. of India instead.

Need I enumerate the advantages which would flow from the adoption of the first proposition? The public would buy their

sugar considerably cheaper; coffee, rum, &c. would also fall in price; while the export of our manufactures to India might be increased to an indefinite amount. West India produce having no longer the monopoly of the home market, necessity, the mother of invention, would force upon the slaveowner the adoption of measures to diminish the expense of raising his produce; and I have shown that these would consist with the welfare of the slaves; who, under more favourable treatment, would lose the habits and propensities that now degrade them, and would gain somewhat of the characteristics of freemen.

As, however, the best mode of management is not immediately found out, the adoption of the second proposition would make sure of the matter; while the adoption of the third would secure to the slave the benefit of his exertions. But as we have not the present means of enforcing these measures, and as, unfortunately, they may be long delayed, I would urge the instant adoption of the fourth proposition, which every one has in his own power. I urge it upon the score of religious principle, of humanity, of policy, of self-interest; and I feel persuaded that I shall not appeal in vain. Ignorance of the actual state of things has been the cause of slavery having been so long suffered to exist; that ignorance removed, he is without excuse who shall connive at its continuance. There is only one point, upon which a conscientious man may withhold his concurrence, and that is, the consideration that these measures may ruin the slaveowners. On this head, it is important to bear in mind, that they will be ruined under their present system. At the present rate of decrease, the day will soon arrive, when the number of slaves will be insufficient to cultivate the land now cultivated, the productiveness of which is every year diminishing.

A man can keep himself cheaper than he can be kept by any body else; and when men are multiplied, the competition of numbers increases the productiveness of the labourer, in a greater ratio than the cost of his maintenance increases; but this competition cannot take place under a system of slave-labour.

In the progress of mankind from savage life, by cultivation and commerce, to the state of civilized society, we find that land is plentiful and cheap, because men are scarce and dear; and land is scarce and dear, when men are plentiful. In the natural state of society, then, it is manifestly to the interest of the owner of land, that population should increase, and that the labourers should be freemen; for it is only under a system of free labour that the difference between the productiveness of labour and the cost of maintenance will be the greatest.

To those who, adopting these views, shall be desirous of assisting in their execution, it will afford satisfaction to see how soon they may effect the extinction of slavery. In the colony of Honduras, which has about 2,400 slaves, Saturday and Sunday are given up to the slave, which is from one-fourth to one-fifth more time than he has in any other colony; and here the manumissions

proceed at the rate of about one per cent. per annum, which is one-third faster than the rate in any other colony, twenty times faster than the rate in two of them, and more than three times as fast as the aggregate rate in the West Indies collectively. These two days are, however, only half the time the slave ought to have; for Sunday is one of them, and it is the market day; but if he had double the time, we may infer that the rate of manumissions would be doubled. Moreover, in this colony, the price of a slave, when purchasing his freedom, is more than three times the market price; we may therefore infer, that if the law compelled his manumission at the market price, the manumissions would increase threefold. On both these accounts, we may assume, that if the proposed measures were adopted, the number of slaves who would annually purchase their freedom would be increased fivefold, a rate of increase which, if the population remained stationary, would extinguish slavery in twenty years; but as the improved condition, arising from more food and clothing and less work, would occasion an increase of the slave population, by the natural process, which we will assume at the rate at which the enfranchised blacks increase, viz. two per cent. per annum, we must calculate the effect of the manumissions in reducing the number of slaves at three per cent. per annum, which would free the whole race in little more than thirty-three years. This may, indeed, seem to many a very long period; but if effectual encouragement were given to marriage among the slaves; if their religious instruction were systematically and generally provided for; if the separation of families for sale were peremptorily prohibited, under all circumstances; if the property of slaves were legally secured to them, as well as the power of disposing of it as they please; if the evidence of slaves were received, quantum valeat, in courts of law,—I have no doubt but the period of the extinction of slavery would be brought much nearer: for, as the number of freemen increased, the value of slaves would decrease, and manumissions would proceed in an increasing ratio.

Now, when will slavery cease in our colonies, if things are allowed to go on as they have since the abolition of the slave trade? The average rate of manumissions is about one in four to five hundred per annum; the average rate of decrease, by deaths exceeding births, is about one in two hundred per annum, excluding Mauritius. These two causes will clear off the slave population in 120 years. And who is the principal performer in this process of emancipation?—Death! And does death make compensation for the victims he releases?—No; but the people of England do for him! What is the value of 4,700 slaves, at £50 a head?—£235,000. What is the amount of extra profit to the planters, arising from the increase of 3s. per cwt. to the price of sugar by the bounty?—about £500,000. Alas! the slave-owner would be remunerated, if death's victims were twofold.—Death's victims, do I say?—they are the victims offered upon the altar of Mammon; that altar which the rulers of England erected

in days gone by, and which the people of England have laboured to support. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance

ye did it, as did also your rulers."

Countrymen and friends,—if these things be so, what remains for us to do? Have such passages as the following no meaning at the present day? or were they "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come?" "There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel." "And he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed." "And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" "For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy." "Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

But let us examine the question of compensation to the planters more narrowly. When a slave is enabled to purchase his freedom, a jury must assess his value; and that value will always be found in his market price, whatever it be, now and at all future time, as long as it is worth a planter's while to buy slaves. On this portion of his property the slaveowner will, therefore, receive full compensation, by the third proposition.

What compensation, then, is he to receive for the loss occasioned by the lessened demand for sugar, consequent upon the execution of the first proposition? None;—because, whether he raised sugar by freemen or by slaves, that measure ought to be adopted as one of sound general policy, which looks to the interest of the consumers, and not of the producers of a commodity. Now, it is the interest of the latter to sell as dear, and of the former to buy as cheap, as they can; and the competition of producers is the best and the only security for the consumers. But this competition the discriminating duties prevent. Who ever heard of compensation being given to the manufacturer, who, working with a clumsy machine, has his labour superseded and his profits brought to nought, by the contrivance of a better apparatus? What compensation did copyists receive when printing was invented? Need I strive to enumerate the almost innumerable similar cases which have occurred in our own day, which are continually occurring, and which must go on as long as the world lasts? Is the progress of society to be arrested, and are the laws of nature to be reversed, for the sake of the planters? The first proposition, which is good in principle, and expedient in practice, is only the more strengthened by its being the most powerful means of gradually abolishing slavery.

Let us see what will be the probable effect of the proposed measures upon the value of land, compared with the certain effect of things being allowed to go on at their present rate. In 120 years no slaves will be in existence in our West India colonies; the 90,000 free, black, and coloured people will have increased to 306,000; and their number will have been further increased by the annual manumissions to 462,000 free men. This will com-

prise the whole labouring population of the colonies.

Now, what would the population amount to in 33 years, under the state of things which we suppose to follow the adoption of the proposed measures? The 720,000 slaves, increasing at the rate of two per cent. per annum, would, in this period, amount to 1,195,200, and they would all be free men; to which is to be added, the increase of the 90,000 free blacks in the same period; and we have a population of 1,344,600 free labourers; and in 87

years more they would amount to 3,684,204.

According to the principle before laid down, under which of the circumstances as, to population, at the end either of 33 or 120 years, would land be of the most value? The every-day experience of every man suffices to show, that when labourers are numerous, the wages of labour are low; and the experience of ages shows, that as population increases, land rises in value. is, therefore, clear, that, with the greater population, the cultivation of the colonies would be carried on cheaper; that the quantity of produce would be greater; and that the land would be of higher value. But, with the smaller population, it is very doubtful if sugar would be cultivated at all, and certainly not to the same extent as now; the wages of labour would be high, and the value of land low; the 477,500 free men would be chiefly small proprietors, whom no wages would tempt to labour for another; or artificers, whom nothing would tempt to till the earth; the cultivation of the soil would be principally for the purpose of raising food for its own population; and there would be few exports. Who does not see in this latter picture the ruin of the planters, or in the former, their prosperity?

Should there be no compensation, then, for the time the slaveowner is compelled, by the second proposition, to give up his slave? Yes, if the giving up that time causes a loss of property, which would be the case, if, under a free competition with free men, the slaves should not produce as much of sugar, or any other commodities, as there is a demand for. When the planter shall prove that he could sell more sugar at a profit, if he could produce more; and that the want of the time given up to the slave is the sole cause of his not producing more, he will then be

entitled to compensation.

For example, suppose that the effect of the first proposition should reduce the demand for West India sugar one-fourth, but that the effect of the second proposition should diminish the quantity produced one-third, we should have to make up to the

planters the value of the difference, or one-twelfth.

I am persuaded, however, that the slaves would, under their improved condition, and with brighter prospects before them, produce as much for their masters in four days, as they now do in six; they would, at least, produce as much as their masters

would find a profit in the sale of. On this head, it is important to observe, that, by the laws of one of the islands, (St. Lucie) it is provided, that if a master shall allow his slave two days in the week out of crop, and a day and a half in crop, exclusive of Sunday, he need not give him any food; the slaves are, moreover, to be supplied with two shirts and two pair of trowsers for each male, and two shifts and two petticoats for each female, annually.

Now this proves, that the time named in the second proposition is not more than equivalent to the food and clothing which the planters themselves consider the slaves ought to have.

Reader, I turn to thee. What is thy duty in this matter? Recollect, that every particle of slave-produce consumed, rivets more strongly the fetters of the slave, binds him more firmly in that thraldom, which precludes his exercising the attributes of man, and keeps him in a state of ignorance of, and alienation from, God. Do you profess yourself a Christian? Does no menitor stir within you? Listen to the suggestions of conscience; approve yourself in the sight of all men the follower of Him who came "to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" who, enjoining his apostles freely to give, because freely they had received, requires of us also to be strenuous in assisting all men to procure those blessings which we ourselves enjoy.

Are you among the legislators of your country? Remember that you exercise this trust for the benefit of mankind, and to the glory of God. Beware how you obstruct the efficacy of the prayer which ascends weekly from the congregations of our church, petitioning the throne of grace that you may be endued "with grace, wisdom, and understanding." Have your opinions on this subject been taken from others? Deal fairly now with the evidence laid before you; follow the convictions of your reason; act upon your own judgment; do your part in causing "the provisions of the law to accord with the principles of nature." The question you have to decide, is not as to the greater or less degree of comfort and happiness the slaves are to enjoy, but whether they are to live or to die;—"therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

Is your lot cast in the humbler walks of life? Take heed that you "follow not a multitude to do evil." It will be no excuse, when you stand before the judgment-seat of God, that you did only as others did. They, perhaps, are, as you were, ignorant of the condition of the slaves; but now, that you are instructed in the means of doing your duty, flinch not from it. Look around you, and count the blessings you possess, in the security of life and property, in the free exercise of your own will, in the communion and sympathy of your friends, in the endearments of home. By all you hold dear in this life, or hope for in the next, I adjure you to stand forth the uncompromising

champion of the wretched slaves. The voice of wisdom shall ascend from the public meeting to the Parliament House; though only uttered by few, it will, as the still small voice of conscience, overpower the cry of ignorance, prejudice, avarice, and passion; and slavery, that foul and festering sore in our constitution; that blot on the page of our history; that stain on our name and nation,—shall vanish before the breath of truth, as the earth shall melt away at the blast of the trump that shall summon to judgment all the kindreds of the earth.

M.

*** For further information on this subject, see "Stephen on West India Slavery;" "Adam Hodgson's letter to Say, on free and slave labour;" "Review of the Slave Trade and Slavery, published at Birmingham, 1827;" "Relief for West Indian Distress, by James Cropper;" "Support of Slavery investigated, by ditto;" "Annual Reports and Monthly Reporters of the Anti-Slavery Society."

THE

NEW SLAVE LAWS

OF

JAMAICA AND ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EXAMINED;

With an Especial Reference

TO THE

EULOGIES RECENTLY PRONOUNCED UPON THEM
IN PARLIAMENT.

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NEW SLAVE LAWS

OF

JAMAICA AND ST. CHRISTOPHER'S.

EXAMINED, &c.

So much has recently been said in both Houses of Parliament, by persons of high authority, of the general excellence of the Provisions of the Slave Law of Jamaica, passed in December, 1826, but disallowed by His Majesty on account of its religious intolerance; as well as of the still higher claims to approbation of the new Slave Law of St. Christopher's; that we are induced to lay before our readers a detailed examination of both these Acts. It seems of great importance that the public should not be misled by its reverence for any authorities, however high, into a belief which is inconsistent with the facts of the case: and it seems important also, that those authorities, if they should find that they have been induced to make statements which are inaccurate, should have an opportunity of correcting them, as well as of ascertaining the sources of the misinformation by which they have been themselves deceived.

We proceed, therefore, without further preface, to the proposed examination.

I. JAMAICA SLAVE LAW, OF 1826.

On the 11th May, 1826, Earl Bathurst transmitted to the Governor of Jamaica, drafts of eight bills, with the view of their being submitted to the Legislature for its consideration and adoption. The bills so submitted were rejected by it without hesitation or exception.

In lieu of these bills, a new consolidated Slave Law was passed, in December, 1826, in which the Legislature professed to have embodied every part of Lord Bathurst's suggestions which it could venture to adopt. It will be necessary to examine in detail what part of them was actually engrafted on the new Law.

1. Protector and Guardian of Slaves.

Lord Bathurst proposed that an Officer should be constituted with this designation, who should be armed with power to secure to the slaves

the benefit of the various measures of improvement deemed essential by His Majesty's Government, (such as the marriage tie, the right of giving evidence, of acquiring and enjoying property, and of redeeming themselves at their fair value, the repose of Sunday, freedom from the driving-whip, and from excessive arbitrary punishment, &c.); and who should be especially commissioned to protect and guard the slaves from oppression and wrong;—and that this Officer (nominated by the Crown, and removable at pleasure when guilty of negligence, or misconduct,) should be a person wholly unconnected with the possession or even the administration of slave property.

The legislature of Jamaica rejected this proposition, and in lieu of it constituted the vestry of each parish, consisting, exclusively, of the White Planters, a Council of Protection to hear and determine one single case of complaint on the part of the slave. But even this was no new enactment. It had stood as part of the law for a long time, and may be found in the Act of 1816, (§ 25 and 26), as well as in that

of 1826, (§ 34 and 35.)

These clauses, however, not only do not adopt the principle of Lord Bathurst's measure, but they either wholly evade it, or are directly opposed to it. The very parties against whose maltreatment of the slaves it was his Lordship's purpose to guard, are those whom the Jamaica legislature constitutes their official protectors, and their protection extends only to a single case of injury.

It is impossible to place the utter uselessness of these clauses in a clearer light than Mr. Huskisson has placed it in his despatch of Sept. 22d, 1827, (see page 3 of the papers lately presented to Parliament.)

"The Council of Protection," he says, "cannot be considered an effectual substitute for the office of a distinct and independent Protector. It will consist of those individuals over whom the Protector was to exercise his superintendance. Their duties are limited to the single case of extreme bodily injury, and are to be discharged only if they think proper. The periodical returns, required from the Protector upon oath, are not to be made by the Council, nor are they even bound to keep a journal of their proceedings. No provision is made for executing the duties of the office, in different parts of the colony, upon fixed and uniform principles; and the number of persons united in this trust is such as entirely to destroy the sense of personal and individual responsibility."

This view of the subject is amply confirmed in the first Report of His Majesty's Commissioner, Mr. Dwarris, where, speaking of the operation of the "Guardian Act" of Grenada, he observes, "There are no persons to be found" (to execute it) "who are, as they ought to be, independent. They are chiefly overseers or managers. Can they be expected to say that the clothing or food furnished is insufficient? If they do, may they not be afraid of the charge being retaliated?"

Dwarris's First Report, p. 98.

The refusal of the Jamaica legislature on this point is not a matter of trivial moment, a mere insulated item in the list of omissions. The functions of Protector are essential to the efficiency, and even to the vitality, of every ameliorating provision. Had all the other proposed

improvements been adopted, they must still have proved ineffective without this. Without an independent functionary watching over the due execution of the laws, recording, reporting, and prosecuting offences, redressing grievances, vindicating rights, &c. &c. the best laws must prove, to a considerable degree, if not altogether, a dead letter.

Innumerable instances might be adduced to show that the ameliorating laws, hitherto passed in the West Indies, from the year 1788 to the present day, have proved wholly inefficient for want of due executory provisions; for want, in short, of an independent officer, immediately responsible to the crown, and charged, at the hazard of his office and of the penalties affixed to neglect, with asserting the rights. and redressing the wrongs of the slaves. Even with such a protector. to enforce the laws in their favour would prove an arduous and difficult task. But without him the laws would go to sleep from the moment of their enactment. In 1788, almost all the colonial legislatures were induced to pass ameliorating laws, with a view of preventing Parliament, by this appearance of reform, from abolishing the Slave Trade. Credit was given them at the time for the humane tendency and design of these enactments. But sixteen or seventeen years afterwards, when Parliament called for information as to the practical effect of these laws. it turned out to be the fact, as may be seen in the parliamentary returns of 1804 and 1805, that, from the time they passed, not one of them had been enforced or even thought of. The answer of General Prevost, the governor of Dominica, might have sufficed for all the islands. None of the reforms, he tells us, had been carried into effect, "the Act having been considered from the day it was passed, until this hour, as a political measure to avert the interference of the mother country in the management of slaves."

2.—Restraining Arbitrary Punishments.

Lord Bathurst proposed, in one of the drafts of bills sent out by him, materially to restrain the power of arbitrary punishment possessed by the master or his delegate, and, while the intensity of such punishments should be limited, to secure a regular record and return, duly au-

thenticated, of all that should be inflicted.

The legislature of Jamaica refused to adopt this proposal; and their harsh laws on the subject remain unaltered and unmitigated. In the law of 1826, as in all the preceding slave codes of that island, the master or his delegate is authorized to inflict at his discretion, on the body of every man, woman, and child, thirty-nine lashes, for any offence, or for no offence, without trial, and without being obliged to assign a reason, or being liable, in any way, to be called to account, for so doing. He has, besides, the power of inflicting other punishments, without any limit short of mutilation and dismemberment or what a jury may deem wanton cruelty; and he may imprison in the stocks for any length of time. In short, the old law of Jamaica on this subject remains in its full force, as may be seen by comparing § 37 of the Act of 1826, with § 27 of the Act of 1816, and with all former Acts.

The remarks of Mr. Huskisson (Papers, p. 3,) will shew still more

6 Slave Law of Jamaica-Driving-Flogging Females-Sunday, &c.

clearly the complete failure of the Jamaica legislature to meet the wishes of His Majesty on this important point.

3.—The Driving Whip.

Lord Bathurst proposed that the driving system should be entirely abolished.

The legislature of Jamaica refused to comply with this proposal. They have neither abolished it, nor in any way, regulated its use.

4.—Flogging of Females.

Lord Bathurst proposed that the flogging of females should be prohibited.

The legislature of Jamaica rejected a motion to that effect. It even refused, when called upon to do so, to forbid that indecent exposure of the persons of women, which the present mode of punishing them renders necessary; that mode being to extend them prone on the ground, at full length, and, baring their bodies, to inflict upon them the lacerations of the cart-whip.

5.—Abolition of Sunday Markets and Sunday Labour.

The Sunday labour of the slaves has hitherto been chiefly that of marketing, and of cultivating on that day, (twenty-six other days in the year, having been allowed them by law,) their own provision grounds for the regular subsistence of themselves and their families. It was the purpose of His Majesty's Government, as may be clearly seen in Lord Bathurst's circular despatch of July 9, 1823, that some other day should be substituted in lieu of Sunday with a view to those important objects; and that Sunday should be exclusively appropriated to the purposes of rest from labour and of moral and religious instruction. Without such substitution these purposes were obviously unattainable. The slaves had hitherto been obliged and required to appropriate the Sunday to raising their food. If they should be made to rest from labour on that day, without having equivalent time given them on another day in which to raise their food, they would be exposed to famine. To make the Sunday, therefore, a day of repose, without the substitution of another day, was obviously impossible.

But neither in Jamaica, nor in any other island where the slaves subsist on food raised by themselves, has this recommendation of the Government been carried into effect, so that no alternative is left to them, but that of either starving, or continuing to work their provision grounds

on the Sunday as before.

These remarks apply also to Sunday markets, which are the only markets to which the slaves have access; and to which, therefore, they must continue to resort until another day is appointed by law. No such appointment, however, has taken place in Jamaica. No day is there allowed to the slaves in lieu of Sunday, either for marketing, or for cultivating their provision grounds; and therefore they must, of necessity, continue to do both on that day. The only change the law has undergone, is one which bears extremely hard upon the slave without any compensatory benefit of any kind. We mean that clause in the

disallowed Act of 1826, (§ 6,) which restricts the hours of Sunday markets to eleven in the forenoon. Many of the slaves who attend them have to bring thither their heavy loads, ten, fifteen, and even twenty miles, on foot; to dispose of them; and then to reinvest the proceeds in such articles as they may want; before they retrace their way homeward. And certainly the time to which the market is restricted is quite inadequate for those purposes, without their employing, after a whole week of toil, a great part of the Saturday night in preparing their produce for the market, and in travelling thither. But besides all this, the limitation can serve no moral or religious purpose. It is quite hopeless that slaves who have had the laborious employment of preparing their loads, and travelling with them to and from market on the Sunday, will employ their interval of leisure in going to church to be instructed. And if they should, how are they to dispose of their little articles of marketing during their attendance?

In short, on this important head, nothing has been done in Jamaica, that does not deteriorate rather than improve the condition of the And when it is considered that the rest of the Sunday is essential, nay, indispensable to the communication of that moral and religious instruction which has been uniformly represented by the Government, in their despatches and speeches, as the basis of all improvement, it must be felt and acknowledged, while Sunday continues to be thus desecrated by marketing and labour, and the slave continues to be thus deprived both of the bodily rest which Sunday provides for the labourer in every other part of the world, and of the only time, that of Sunday, which he can have for obtaining moral and religious instruction, that we have not yet reached the very beginning of effective improvement. In Jamaica, too, there exist sufficient means of religious instruction to enable the slaves to employ that day profitably, there being not only a considerable number of Moravian, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and other missionaries, but a Bishop, and a large establishment of Clergy of the Church of England, whose efforts are paralyzed by the continuance of Sunday markets, and by the continued necessity of Sunday labour, in consequence of no day being yet given them in lieu of Sunday.

6.—Granting to Slaves a right of redeeming themselves or their family, at a fair appraisement.

This is another of the proposals of Lord Bathurst, which the legislature of Jamaica has not adopted. They repudiate the very principle on which it proceeds.

7.—Preventing the separation of Families by sale.

In the year 1735, a law was passed in Jamaica for regulating the sale of slaves taken in execution by the Marshal or Sheriff. It directs that when a husband and wife, or parents and children, are *taken* together, they shall be sold together by auction in one lot, the rest of the persons taken being sold singly.

By way of fulfilling the requisition of Lord Bathurst on this subject, which went to make the separation of families by judicial sale un-

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lawful, they have merely renewed the above provision of the Act of 1735, thus evading the principle of Lord Bathurst's recommendation.

This provision too refers solely to sales in execution, and not at all to sales at the will of the master. It was proposed to the Assembly to restrain the master from separating families by voluntary sale, but the motion was rejected. In the great majority, however, of sales in execution, with which sales alone the law of Jamaica interferes, it is perfectly notorious, nay is manifest from every weekly gazette of Jamaica, that it seldom happens that a whole family is levied upon together, either for debt or taxes. For the most part, indeed, only a single individual is taken at a time, a father, a mother, or a child, whose separation, in that case, from every domestic relation may of course be legally perpetrated by being sold at auction to the highest bidder. The law, in short, provides for a single contingency which rarely occurs, and leaves all other sales and transfers to be regulated by accident, or by individual cupidity or caprice.

8. Giving to slaves a right of acquiring, and of securely enjoying, possessing and transmitting property.

The disallowed law of Jamaica conferred on the slaves no right of property whatever, as may be seen by referring to the only clauses of that Act, (§ 16 and 17,) which have any reference to the subject The proposal of Lord Bathurst was to the effect that slaves should be intitled by law to acquire, hold, enjoy, sell, transfer, or bequeath, land and all

other property, whether real or personal.

The legislature of Jamaica, instead of giving to the slaves any such legal right, contented itself with an empty recognition that "by usage slaves had been permitted to possess personal property, free from the control or interference of their owners;" that is to say, that their owners had permitted them to do so. And the enactment grounded on this recognition, is not that that which they enjoyed only by the forbearance or permission of their masters, shall be assured to them by law; but that if any one takes from a slave any property of which such slave is lawfully possessed, the persons guilty of such taking shall forfeit and pay £10. over and above the value of such property. Now the mockery even of this imperfect enactment is plain at first sight; for by the law of Jamaica, as it now stands, even if the Act of 1826 had continued in force, no slave can be lawfully possessed of property. All he may possess belongs of right and in law to his master. These clauses therefore furnish a most remarkable instance of the artful evasion of the principle recommended by Lord Bathurst, in the very enactment which professes to adopt it. - In case of debt or bequest no means of suit are given to the slave; nay in the latter case (§ 17,) he is actually debarred from the use of any such means either in law or equity.—To rob him of his property, however valuable, is not made a larceny or a felony, but a matter which, if complained of and proved, may be settled by a penalty of £7 sterling. So that the new Act would have left him in the same helpless and unprotected state as to all essential rights of property, in which he was before it was framed.

Our view of this most material point is confirmed by Mr. Huskis-

son's despatch of the 22d Sept. 1827, in which he remarks, that the property of slaves is left "in an unprotected state." "No action," he says, "is given to them or to any person on their behalf, for the defence or recovery of it. The single case in which any remedy is provided, is that in which the property of the slave is taken away. No mention is made of that much more important class of cases in which property may be withheld. The slave could not, under this law, recover a debt, nor obtain damages for a breach of contract." Nay, "the slave could not make his complaint, except upon the condition of receiving a punishment if the Justices should deem it groundless. The slaves are also excluded from acquiring any interest in land, a restriction at once impolitic and unnecessary." Mr. Huskisson might have added, that they have no legal title given them to any other kind of property any more than to land.

9. Establishment of Savings' Banks.

The proposal to establish Savings' Banks for the security of the property of slaves has been entirely rejected by the Jamaica legislature.

10. Legalizing and protecting Marriage.

In the Act of 1826, the marriage of slaves was, for the first time, recognized by the Jamaica legislature as entitled to any place in the code of that island. On the very defective mode in which that recognition has been made, nothing better can be said than has been said by Mr. Huskisson, in his despatch of 22d Sept. 1827. (Papers, p. 4.)

No security, he tells us, has been provided against the unreasonable refusal of the owner's consent. "By confining the power of celebrating marriage to the clergy of the Established Church, every other class of religious teachers are deprived of the means of exercising a salutary influence over the minds of their disciples; while the Roman Catholic priests are abridged of rights which they enjoy in every other part of His Majesty's dominions, under the Marriage Act of George the Second. The necessity of the parties previously undergoing an examination by a clergyman of the Established Church, as to the nature and obligations of the marriage contract," he adds, "is not apparent, and would be a serious impediment to forming such connections," while it opens a most inconvenient and uncalled for range of inquiry. And, moreover, "the Act does not require any registry of the marriages of slaves, or even any periodical returns of such marriages."

But even these defects, as pointed out by Mr. Huskisson, numerous and important as they are, form but a part of the objections that may be urged against the clause (§ 4.) on the subject of marriage. The fol-

lowing may be added:—

1. By excluding all teachers of religion from the right of celebrating marriage, except the clergy of the Established Church, the numerous converts to Christianity made by the Moravian, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist missionaries, to say nothing of the Roman Catholics, are laid under peculiar disadvantages. These missionaries are by far the fittest persons to judge of the character of their own followers, and

the best and most efficient agents, in impressing upon them the obliga-

tions of the marriage tie.

2. Baptism is made, by the Act, an indispensable preliminary to marriage, on what account is not very obvious. Why should not the sanction of law be given to marriages contracted between parties who are unbaptized, or who are even Mahommedans or heathens? The laws of India sanction Mussulman and Hindoo marriages. Why should persons, merely because not baptized, be forced to live in a state of illicit concubinage?

3. It would seem further expedient that where connections have been already formed, and a family has been the fruit of such connections, the utmost facility should be given in conferring on such unions the sanction of law, and thus bestowing upon them both the validity and permanency of a legal and authorized contract. Nothing could more strikingly evince the indifference, if not distaste, with which the legislature of Jamaica regards the institution, among the slaves, of marriage, that prime source and cement of domestic comfort, and that indispensable precursor of a wholesome and progressive growth of population, than the tardy and reluctant recognition which, after forty years of discussion, it has at length condescended to bestow on the marriage of slaves; and the many restrictions, and difficulties, and defects, with which even that ungracious recognition has been clogged, and rendered almost wholly inefficient to any useful purpose. And why is this? Can any injury arise to the master from the universal prevalence of marriage among the slaves? Or can any injury arise to the slaves themselves from affording them every possible facility for converting their present state of lawless concubinage into a pure and holy union, sanctioned alike by religion and law?

11.—The admission of the Evidence of Slaves in civil and criminal cases.

The proposal of Lord Bathurst was, that every slave should be competent to give evidence in all civil and criminal cases, whom any clergyman of the Established Church, or any minister of the Kirk of Scotland, or any Roman Catholic priest, or any other person being a public teacher of religion, and licensed by the Secretary of State, or Governor of the colony for the time being, shall certify duly to understand the nature and obligations of an oath; excepting only in cases of civil suit or action in which the owner of the slave is directly concerned, and in cases where any white person may be charged with, or prosecuted, for any offence punishable with death.

For the last restriction, it does not appear that any valid reason can be assigned. Why the white man alone, as contradistinguished from any other freeman, should be protected against slave evidence is not very obvious, while the distinction is both opprobrious to the white man, and most exceptionable in itself. The cruelties, mayems, mutilations, and murders which have taken place in the slave colonies, have been for the most part perpetrated by white men. The admission of slave evidence was in great measure desired to guard against the recur-

rence of these evils. But the exception in question puts an extinguisher on this hope, by conferring impunity on the very parties whom it was most important to restrain. Under the operation of such an exception, a white man may safely murder a slave, though a hundred or a thousand other slaves were present as witnesses of the fact.

But the Jamaica legislature goes far beyond Lord Bathurst in the number, and in the injurious tendency of the restrictions it has imposed on the admissibility of slave evidence. These are well enumerated by Mr. Huskisson in his letter of the 22d Sept. 1827.—(Papers, p. 5.)

- 1. Slave evidence is entirely excluded in all civil cases; and even in criminal cases it is confined to the following offences, viz. murder, felony, burglary, robbery, rebellion or rebellious conspiracy, treason or traiterous conspiracy, rape, the mutilating, branding, dismembering or cruelly treating a slave, seditious meetings, and the harbouring or concealing of runaways. In all other cases the evidence of slaves is excluded by the Act, which, as Mr. Huskisson observes, contemplates "the admission of such evidence in those cases of crime only in which they are usually either the actors or the sufferers"—while it excludes it "in other cases, a distinction which does not seem to rest on any solid foundation."
- 2. The admissibility of the evidence of a slave is made to depend on his being able to produce a certificate of baptism, although, as Mr. Huskisson well remarks, "there is not any necessary connexion between the baptism of a witness and his credibility." By such a rule, indeed, if it were generally adopted, unnumbered millions of His Majesty's subjects in other parts of the world would be rendered incompetent witnesses.
- 3. "The rule which requires that two slaves at the least shall constantly testify to the same fact, on being examined apart, before any free person can be convicted on slave testimony," greatly diminishes, in Mr. Huskisson's view, the value even of this partial enactment, as, "in some particular cases, such as that of rape, such a restriction might secure impunity to offenders of the worst description."—(Papers, p. 5.)

4. "The rejection of the testimony of slaves, twelve months after the commission of the crime, would be fatal to the ends of justice in many cases: nor is it easy to discover what solid advantage could result from

it in any case."—(Papers, p. 5.)

5. Mr. Huskisson objects further to the provision which debars a court from declaring a slave free, on whose testimony the owner has been convicted of any crime; for he thinks it would be very practicable to deprive a slave of every motive for giving false evidence against his owner, without incurring the inconvenience of leaving the slave in the power of an owner convicted, by his testimony, of an extreme abuse of authority.

6. He lastly blames the legislature for "refusing to establish a *Record* of the names of all slaves certified to be competent witnesses; and thus neglecting the means of providing a cheap and effectual encouragement to good conduct, and of investing the religious teachers of the slaves, with a powerful and legitimate influence over them.

(Papers, p. 5.)

But there is still another important defect in this law which Mr. Huskisson has overlooked, and that is the entire omission of all those qualifications for being admitted as witnesses, which are derived from the certificates of religious teachers, whether of the Established Church, or of any other denomination of Christians. In Jamaica a great majority of the religious slaves, whose testimony would be the most worthy of confidence, are in connection with Ministers either of the Scotch Kirk, or of the Moravian, Wesleyan Methodist, or Baptist communions, and who alone would be able to testify satisfactorily to the character and competency of their own disciples. But no reference whatever is made to these Ministers, nor indeed even to the Ministers of the Established Church in this Act. The competency of slaves is made to depend on their baptism alone.

Such is a correct view of the manner in which the legislature of Jamaica has met the requisitions and recommendations of His Majesty's Government; and the whole of its proceedings may be characterized as the *rejection* or *evasion* of the proposed reforms, both in their principle and in their details.

But these are not the only defects with which the disallowed Slave Code of Jamaica is chargeable. There were also introduced into it not a few provisions of a most objectionable description, which are noticed by Mr. Huskisson, in his despatch of 22d Sept. 1827.

1. The new and oppressive restraints imposed on religious worship and instruction, by § 85, 86 and 87, and which immediately led to the

disallowance of the Act. On these we need not comment.

2. The power given to private individuals by § 37 and 38, to commit their slaves to prison for ten days at a time, without a warrant of a Magistrate; and there to punish them with 39 lashes of the cartwhip, without a trial, or even the assignment of a cause, and without any record being kept or return made of such punishment.—And even this enactment harsh as it is, was an improvement on the former law, for it limited, for the first time, the indefinite and unlimited power of incarceration formerly possessed by private individuals, a power, however, which may still be exercised by confinement in their own private stocks, without any limit whatever as to time.—A private individual may even work his slave in a collar all day; flog him afresh with 39 lashes, as often as he pleases, if only the former lacerations are just healed; and keep him in the stocks all night, and during all the intervals of labour, as long as he pleases; without any one having a right to call him to account for so doing.

3. The power given to three Magistrates of punishing every slave complaining against his master, if they shall deem his complaint to be

groundless.

Mr. Huskisson's comment upon this clause (§ 39) is peculiarly entitled to attention, because it is a power flagrantly unjust in itself, and which cannot but be productive of the most cruel and oppressive results; and which disgraces, we are sorry to say, not the Jamaica statute book alone, but the slave codes of the other British Colonies. "The com-

plaint," says Mr. Huskisson, "which a slave is authorized (by this clause) to make would not I should fear," (viz. under the circumstances of summary punishment to be inflicted upon him, in case of his failing to prove his complaint), "be a very effectual means of redress. As the Magistrates must always be three proprietors of the same parish, there is a manifest danger of the influence of local partialities. As every groundless complaint is to be punished, it is to be feared that many well founded complaints will not be preferred. The mere failure of evidence," (and this is more especially the case where slave evidence is not admissible) " in support of a complaint is surely not enough to justify the punishment of the party complaining. The owner should be bound to prove that the complaint was malicious or frivolous." And he clearly ought to do so, not in the summary way now pursued, by which the plaintiff is on the instant converted into a defendant, but after having given the slave fair notice of the charge against him, and afforded him an opportunity of collecting his witnesses, and preparing his defence.

4. The excessive amount of the hours of labour fixed by § 27, of this law, which contemplates the working of the slave in the field for eleven hours and a half daily out of crop, and which places no limit to the continuity of his labour during crop, that is for four or five months of the year.

Mr. Huskisson justly fears that considering the climate and the many offices which must be to be performed by the slave after his tale of *field* labour is over,* such excessive exaction will "scarcely be consistent with a due regard for the health of the labourer." Such is the undoubted fact. The effect of such severe and continuous toil in such a climate is manifested by the decrease of the slave population, while the free blacks around them increase rapidly.

5. The principle adopted, in several cases, of inflicting a heavier punishment for the same offence when committed by a slave than when

committed by a free man.

This, says Mr. Huskisson, is "a distinction which reverses the established principle of justice, that the malignity of crimes is enhanced by the superior knowledge and station of the criminal." (Papers, p. 6.) This objection, however, be it remembered, applies with all its force, not to Jamaica alone, but to almost the whole of the legislation of the West Indies.

6. It is a further just objection of Mr. Huskisson to the Jamaica Act of 1826, and it is an objection which also applies generally to West Indian codes, that, "in many cases, both the nature and amount of the punishment to be inflicted on the offending slaves, are left exclusively to the discretion of the Court,"—"an unlimited delegation of authority," for which Mr. Huskisson can see "no necessity."

7. The excessive severity of the laws (§ 84, 89, 90) which punish

^{*} Among these, besides the preparing their food, &c. the most onerous and distressing is the necessity, often imposed on the slaves, of collecting fodder for the cattle after the cessation of field labour, and which prolongs their toil for at least another hour.

with death Obeah, in other words, pretences to supernatural power, and

practices partaking of the nature of conjuration and witchcraft.

Of this description of offence both the belief and the effect are mainly to be ascribed to the undue severity of the law for its suppression. The negro must conceive that there is some awful reality in pretences and practices which excite such unsparing vengeance on the part of the legislature; and the very evil, therefore, which a cold neglect would reduce to insignificance, and above all, which Christian instruction would eradicate, is thus actually fostered and increased by the misapplied severity with which it is denounced and persecuted. Heathen superstition may thus have its martyrs as well as Christianity itself.

8. The excessive severity of the clause (§ 82) which punishes assaults

of slaves on free persons.

"If any slave," such are the words of the Act, "shall assault or offer any violence by striking or otherwise, to or towards any white person or persons of free condition, such slave shall upon conviction be punished with death, transportation, or confinement to hard labour for life, or a limited time, or such other punishment as the court at their discretion shall think proper to inflict." To this enactment Mr. Huskisson justly objects. But he has not adverted to the aggravating circumstance that this harsh and cruel law (the general law of all the West Indies, which, moreover, in not a few instances, denounces death even on imagining the death of a white man) admits of no exception, not even of those extreme rights of self defence which would be respected in every other country, and in every other case. The slave indeed has no rights of self-defence. He dare not raise his hand to or toward a white or free person, even if his property were forcibly taken from him, or his marriage-bed violated, or his own life assailed.

9. The Act also secures indemnity, at the public expense, to the

owner of every slave condemned to death or transportation.

This principle has been frequently denounced by His Majesty's Government as unjust and pernicious, and the sentence, so often pronounced upon it in vain, is once more forcibly repeated by Mr. Huskisson. He condemns the practice as unjust to the public, and still more unjust to the slave. And yet it forms the almost universal law in the

various slave colonies subject to the British crown.

Such are some of the objections preferred by the late Colonial Secretary of State to this Act of the Jamaica legislature, quite independently of its positive rejection, or dextercus evasion of every recommendation of His Majesty on the subject of reform. There is still, however, a farther objection unnoticed by Mr. Huskisson, and which is of no small importance, we mean the law which continues to throw the burden of proof, in questions of the freedom or slavery of an individual, on the person assumed to be a slave. Mr. Huskisson expresses his approbation of certain clauses (54, 55, 56.) on the subject of runaways claiming to be free, and says they appear to him well adapted to prevent the recurrence of abuses. But Mr. Huskisson has overlooked the material circumstance, that all these regulations proceed on the principle that the presumed runaway, in the absence of any claim to him from any quarter, is still to be held to the proof of his freedom by documentary

or other equally conclusive evidence, at the peril, if he fail, of being sold as a slave for the public benefit. Many instances might be adduced of black or coloured persons, even in the course of the past year, who though affirming, without contradiction, that they were born free; and in some cases that they had served in the army or navy of Great Britain; but had lost the certificates which would have established the fact; have been sold by auction to the highest bidder, and thus condemned to perpetual slavery, although there was not a person in the island who could advance the very slightest claim to their services, or disprove their allegations.

But there are some parts of this disallowed Act which Mr. Huskisson regards with approbation; as first, the abolition of the fee on baptism, (which, however, is a relief to the planter and not to the slave); and secondly, some improvements, in points of form, in the proceedings relative to the trial of offences by slaves; though even here he remarks that, in some material instances, there is still so much complexity in the process, as to make the rules, otherwise beneficial, lose much of

their efficacy in practice.

As to the other regulations which he commends, they are regulations of ancient date, and not produced by the recent demand for a reform of the slave laws. We allude to the time allowed the slaves, exclusive of Sunday, for cultivating their provision grounds; -to the clauses for inspecting the provision grounds of the slave, and for regulating his allowance when he has no such ground;—to the protection required to be given to old and infirm slaves;—and to the encouragement held out, in certain cases, to mothers and nurses. These are all, however, as we have said, of ancient date, and therefore cannot be adduced as any proof of recent improvement. But they are also, as Mr. Huskisson himself admits, deficient in such sanctions and executory provisions, as are required to ensure their efficacy; and it may consequently be presumed that they have not been efficacious. Indeed without the aid of an independent protector, and the free admission of slave-evidence, it is plain, that to such enactments as these, it is impossible to impart any vigour. They must almost necessarily remain without effect. They are a tribute indeed paid to public opinion in this country, but, without adequate sanctions, they can be of very little, if any, use to the slave.

On a review of the whole it must be manifest, that neither in the principle nor in the detail of its legislation has Jamaica made any great progress in improvement, since the resolutions of Parliament were passed in May 1823, and that rather, on the contrary, it has evinced a spirit disposed to resist or to evade all improvement. What makes this the more remarkable is, that all the reforms which the Jamaica legislature has thus continued to reject or to elude, were sanctioned, with one or two exceptions, by the West Indian body in this country, as not only harmless but beneficial. Nor can any thing prove more strongly than this fact, that they furnish no just ground of alarm on the score of their affecting the interests of property. Indeed there has not been a single measure of reform proposed, which appeared to Lord Bathurst, or to

Mr. Canning, or even to the West Indians themselves, resident in this country, to call for pecuniary indemnity, excepting the single measure of conferring on the slaves the right of redeeming themselves. And even in this solitary instance, an adequate indemnity, as we conceive, is secured to the planter by the very enactment which conveys to the

slaves the right in question.

Lord Bathurst in his despatches, and Mr. Canning in his speeches, repeatedly affirmed that, their measures of colonial reform, generally, had had the sanction of the West Indian body; a circumstance which makes the long delay in their adoption the more extraordinary. As an apology for that delay, we are told, that it was always held that the abolition of slavery was to be a gradual work. True, it might be understood that we were to approach the *ultimate end* of our measures of reform gradually. But it was never understood that we were to delay a single day those preliminary measures, the operation of which was gradually to lead to the abolition of slavery. It was requisite to the very commencement of a course of improvement that the proposed reforms should be adopted, and supposing them all to have been adopted, their operation and effect must still have been gradual and slowly progressive. Giving, for example, to the slaves religious instruction, and to that end giving him his Sunday, and a day for marketing and labouring in his grounds in lieu of it; conferring upon them rights of property; recording and reporting arbitrary punishments; abolishing the driving whip and female flogging; appointing a protector; preventing the separation of families by sale, &c. &c. &c.—all these measures, supposing them all to be enacted and passed in a single day, would not be emancipation, though they might lead remotely and ultimately to that end. Indeed the immediate adoption of these preliminary steps was contemplated by his Majesty's government, from the first, as absolutely indispensable to all progress.

On this principle the Order in Council for Trinidad was framed, however defective it may be in some respects. By that order all the various reforms proposed to be adopted were made the subject of one single enactment, and were brought, in one day, into immediate and

contemporaneous operation.

In the very first instructions of Lord Bathurst, of the 9th July 1823, as well as in all his subsequent instructions, the colonial legislatures were urged to the *instant* adoption of the proposed measures. In the despatch of the 9th July 1823, he says, "In conclusion, I have most earnestly to press upon you the necessity of proceeding to carry these improvements into effect with all possible dispatch." And if "you should meet with any serious opposition, you will lose no time in transmitting to me the necessary communication, in order that I may take the earliest opportunity of laying the matter before Parliament, and submitting to their consideration such measures as it may be fit to adopt in consequence."

In the same spirit, on the 16th of March 1824, not nine months later, Mr. Canning lamented, in the House of Commons, the non-adoption by the Assemblies of Lord Bathurst's various recommendations, even in the brief interval of only nine months which had then elapsed. Indeed on

the 15th of May preceding, he had very confidently anticipated their ready adoption by the colonial legislatures: for "we have a right," he

said, "to expect their full and free co-operation."

It is perfectly obvious, therefore, that neither Government nor Parliament contemplated any delay as to the enactment of the laws required to secure to the slaves the *immediate* benefit of the contemplated reforms; and it is no less obvious that the idea of slowness, progression, and gradual advance had respect, in no degree whatever, to the *adoption* of such enactments; but to their effect and *gradual operation* in raising the character of the slave, and fitting him for ultimate freedom. It is impossible to suppose that any thing like graduation could have been contemplated, in the framing and enforcing of laws, for example, appointing a protector; legalizing and protecting the slave's rights of property; legalizing and protecting marriage; abolishing the driving whip, or the flogging of females, &c. These, and the various other proposed reforms, are single acts, which must be completed at once, and do not admit of degree.

II .- NEW LAW OF ST. CHRISTOPHER'S.

We shall be more brief in our examination of this law than in that of Jamaica, many of the observations already made on that of Jamaica

applying equally to that of St. Christopher's.

The new law leaves in force the whole of the previously existing laws respecting slaves, with the exception of four clauses and part of a fifth clause of an Act of 1722. Our inquiry therefore must commence with ascertaining the nature of the laws which remain unrepealed, or are not superseded by the Act which has just received the approval of His Majesty. From an inspection of these statutes, the following, among others, appear to be at this moment laws of St. Christopher's.

1. That in every case of a slave condemned to death, the owner is to be indemnified at the expense of the public,—a principle which His Majesty's Government has repeatedly and strongly condemned. (Act of

1711, § 9, 10. Act of 1722, § 8. and Act of 1759.)

2. That any free person may apprehend any slave, found off his owner's plantation without a ticket, especially on Saturday night and on Sundays, and may inflict upon such slave so found twenty lashes; and that every slave found in the streets and lanes of the town, between ten at night and five in the morning, without a ticket or a lighted candle, shall receive thirty-nine lashes. (Act of 1722, § 13, and Act of 1790.)

3. That any slave who shall entertain, or conceal, or in any way aid or comfort, or give sustenance to, any runaway slave, shall be punished with 50 lashes for the first offence, 100 for the second, 150 for the third, 200 for the fourth, and so on totics quoties. (Act of 1722, § 6.)

4. That if any slave shall hear another slave speak words tending to mutiny, and shall accuse and cause such slave to be apprehended; and if such slave, on being tried and convicted, shall be condemned to death, then the accuser shall be paid three pounds;—but if he shall not make good his accusation, he shall receive such punishment, not ex-

tending to life or member, as the Court shall think fit. (Act of 1722,

\$ 18.)

5. That if any slave shall oppose, struggle with, or strike, any white person, and if the white person be hurt, wounded, bruised or maimed, such slave shall be sentenced to death, dismemberment, or such other punishment as the Court in their discretion shall see fit; but that if any person shall kill a slave in defence of his person or property, or as a runaway refusing to submit, he shall not be liable to any prosecution or damage for the same. (Act of 1711, § 4 and 8.)

6. That the following weekly allowance of provisions is the maximum to which any slave in St. Christopher's is entitled by law. (See Act of

1798, § 1.) viz.

Nine pints of corn, or beans, or oatmeal; or eight pints of pease, or wheat, or rye flour, or Indian corn meal, or Cassava flour; or seven pints of rice; or eight pounds of biscuit; or twenty pounds of yams or potatoes; together with one and a quarter pound of herrings; which allowances may be diminished one-fifth during crop.*

7. That the clothing required to be given to the male slaves is two suits, consisting each of a jacket and pair of trowsers, in the year; and to the women two suits, consisting each of a petticoat and a wrapper; but that only one of these suits need be given in the course of the year,

if a blanket and hat be added to it.

8. That the hours of labour in the field are from five in the morning till seven at night, with an interval of two hours and a half out of

crop; during crop there being no limit. (Act 1798, § 10.)

These will serve as specimens of the laws which appear to be still in force in St. Christopher's, and which, we think, might have been repealed in common with the four or five clauses which have been repealed.† But not having been repealed, they must be taken into account in estimating the value of the recent enactments.

We shall now proceed to consider, as in the case of Jamaica, in what manner the measures specially recommended to the adoption of the Legislature by His Majesty's Government have been carried into effect.

1. Protector or Guardian of Slaves.

The proposal to appoint such an officer has been entirely rejected by the Legislature of St. Christopher's. The tendency of such rejection, we need not repeat, must necessarily be to render useless and inefficient all the other meliorating provisions of the Act; it being clear that if an independent and responsible functionary is not specially appointed to watch over and enforce their execution, they must prove, as in all former cases, a dead letter.

† The repealed clauses condemned to death a slave absenting himself for six months, and gave a reward of six pounds to any one seizing or killing him.

^{*} The miserable inadequacy of these allowances may be estimated by this fact, that the prison allowance in Jamaica, to runaway slaves, for one week, is, by law, fourteen pints of Indian or Guinea corn, or twenty-one pints of corn meal or wheat flour, together with seven herrings, being about double the working allowance of St. Christopher's.

2. Restraining Arbitrary Punishments.

Arbitrary punishment is permitted to the extent of twenty-five lashes only, in one day and for one offence; but to this extent it may be given by the master or his delegate, and if we understand the clause correctly, (§ 11,) by any person. If, however, the number of stripes shall be more than twelve, it cannot be inflicted before the day after the offence, and a free person must be present to witness its infliction; and the punishment must be entered in a plantation Record Book, with all its circumstances, within 48 hours. The Record Book must also contain any punishment, by confinement, exceeding 48 hours. No fresh punishment, by flogging, is to be inflicted until former lacerations are healed. Owners of estates, or their delegates, are subjected to a penalty of from £2 to £20 sterling, for not recording punishments within 48 hours, and to double that penalty for falsifying entries;—and for inflicting any heavier punishment than is allowed by law, they may be indicted and punished by fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the Court. It is also provided, that if a slave shall produce in open Court the marks of recent lacerations, which shall make it manifest that he has been illegally punished, and shall support the exhibition by a consistent statement against the owner or person in charge of him, then such person must repel the accusation either by satisfactory evidence, or by his own oath; otherwise, he shall be adjudged guilty of the alleged offence.—If, however, any owner or his delegate conceives the punishment he is allowed by law to inflict to be inadequate to the slave's offence, he may refer the case to any two justices, who, after inquiry, may direct such corporal punishment as the offence, in their discretion, shall merit. To what extent may not cruelty be carried under such a provision!

The clause, though very defective, is still, without doubt, an improvement on the former law. Mr. Huskisson regrets that so many as twelve lashes may still be inflicted on the instant, without any postponement to check the excesses of sudden anger;—that persons also should be exempted from the necessity of recording punishments not exceeding twelve lashes, or a confinement of 48 hours;—and that periodical returns of these records of punishment should not be required. He objects also to the oath of the owner or his delegate in refutation of a charge of illegal punishment, provided it is to be received as conclusive. It evidently is so intended to be, by the framers of the Act, and there-

fore can hardly be too strongly censured.

3.—The Driving System.

The legislature of St. Christopher's has not refused, like that of Jamaica, to adopt Lord Bathurst's proposal on this point, but has very dexterously evaded it. The terms of the clause submitted to it by Lord Bathurst, were, that it should be "illegal for any person to carry any whip, cat, or other instrument of the like nature, while superintending the labour of any slaves on any plantation, or to use any such whip, cat, or other instrument, for the purpose of impelling or coercing any slave to perform labour of any kind whatever," &c. This Act, however, has prohibited the use of the whip only, (§ 4,) preserving to the

planter the right of using a cat, or any other instrument, for compelling labour. This really looks very like deliberate insult and mockery. Mr. Huskisson, indeed, is so charitable as to suppose the contrary; and that the omission may be unintentional. But it is sufficient to place Lord Bathurst's draft in juxta-position with the Act, to see that this is absolutely impossible. The omission, from the very nature of it, must have been a deliberate and designed evasion. It strengthens this view of the case, that Mr. Dwarris tells us in his Third Report, p. 77, that in St. Christopher's, "flogging is inflicted with the cat-o'-nine-tails." The instrument, therefore, of exemplary punishment in the army, is reserved in St. Christopher's, as the instrument of coercing the labour, and stimulating the industry of the slaves, men and women.

4.—Flogging of Females.

The legislature has refused to abolish female flogging. Women, however, are henceforth to have the high privilege of being flogged "on the shoulders," instead of *the hips*. Mr. Huskisson expresses a hope that it will consent "entirely to abolish a mode of punishment so destructive of self-respect, and so calculated to debase the female character."

5.---Abolition of Sunday Markets and Sunday Labour, and the substitution of another day for these purposes.

Sunday markets, instead of being abolished, are continued and legalized, and no time is given to the slave either for marketing, or for labouring in his provision grounds, excepting Sunday. This is the more to be lamented, because in St. Christopher's, the means of religious instruction are more ample than in most other colonies. Both the Wesleyan Methodists and the Moravians have considerable establishments there, and a large body of slaves is already attached to their congregations. Besides which, the regular Clergy of the Establishment are numerous, consisting of nine Clergymen, and as many catechists. On what pretence therefore are Sunday markets and Sunday labour to be continued in St. Christopher's, and another day refused for these objects, so that Sunday may be devoted to its legitimate objects of repose and religious worship and instruction? The pretence that the means of religious instruction are not attainable there, and to which Mr. Huskisson seems to allow some weight, has really no foundation; and the abolition of Sunday markets and of the necessity of Sunday labour is alone wanting to give those means their due influence and operation. As for the limitation of the markets to eleven o'clock, it is no abatement of the evil, while it is a grievance to the slaves to whom no other day is allowed formarketing. And if, as Mr. Huskisson observes, "the relaxation of the general principle" should be made to terminate on the removal of the destitution of the means of religious instruction, then it ought not, in St. Christopher's, to have been prolonged for a single hour. But. in truth, the very ground on which that relaxation is any where permitted is untenable altogether: for the greater the want or the disproportion of the means of religious instruction, the more necessary does it become to make the means which exist more available, by devoting the

whole of the Sunday to their diligent employment, which is impossible if the slaves must work and must go to market on that day or starve. It were a wretched expedient, in any country, for promoting the interests of religion, deliberately to postpone a compliance with one of its most sacred obligations, and with which too it is in our power to comply, because we cannot multiply the effective ministers of religion in the degree that may be desirable. The very recognition of the sacredness of the Sabbath, by the authorities of the state, is a most important point gained. In St. Kitts, instead of recognizing its sacredness, they have legalized its desecration.

6. Granting to slaves a right of redeeming themselves and their families at a fair appraisement.

"I have perceived with regret," says Mr. Huskisson, "that this Act contains no provision on this very important subject."

7. Preventing the separation of families by sale.

The law of St. Christopher's, on this head, is so far an improvement on that of Jamaica, that families must be seized as well as sold together, in execution. But there is no restraint or any other than judicial sales. There, however, the fault is in the Government who, in the case of Trinidad, departed from their own previously avowed principle of prohibiting separations of families, not only by judicial but by all other sales.

A long proviso is attached to the rule (§ 16) to which Mr. Huskisson does not object, but which, in the want of an independent protector, may go far to deprive the slave of the benefits of the rule, furnishing a plea for its violation, which we believe would not have been thought of, but with a view to its abuse. The Marshal can never have any real difficulty in ascertaining the domestic relations of a slave in St. Christopher's, if he is sincerely desirous of ascertaining them.

8. Rights of property.

Mr. Huskisson has viewed far too favourably the conduct of the legislature of St. Christopher's on this point; for, he says, it has not only "executed" but "exceeded" Lord Bathurst's suggestions. And yet the Act (§ 9) wholly omits the right of holding land, which forms a material part of Lord Bathurst's plan; and, while professing to give the slaves a right of action, it points out no practicable means of his exercising that right. He has no protector to act for him. He cannot even leave the plantation without a ticket.

Mr. Huskisson charitably intimates that the provision (§ 17) which subjects a person who may *rob* a slave only to a small pecuniary mulct (£10 currency or £4 sterling), was not intended by its framers to prevent or defeat the more appropriate remedy of an indictment. But it is quite plain that this is its real and only purpose, and on this account and on this account alone, a similar clause will be found in the Acts of almost every other Island. The pride of the dominant white revolts at the idea of being *criminally* prosecuted for any injury to a slave, and hence alone this anomalous proceeding.

But Mr. Huskisson has overlooked another provision, which seems to us to nullify the whole effect of the clause which he so highly but unjustly extols. We mean the proviso which says, "that nothing herein contained shall repeal an Act of this Island, intituled, an Act to restrain thefts committed by negro slaves, and to prevent the dishonest traffic carried on by such as deal with them." On referring to this Act, dated 4th May, 1790; we find it to be an Act of the most harsh and opppressive description, and which actually goes to exclude slaves from the very possibility of possessing any property at all. It enacts that "if any slave shall have in his possession, in any of the towns of this Island, or in any of the roads leading to the same, any sugar, syrup, cotton, molasses, rum, canes, sprouts, pewter, brass, copper, iron, oats, lumber of all kinds, plantation articles, or utensils, or any kind of merchandize, except such provisions as may have been given him for allowance, without a ticket from his master, &c. containing an account of the same, in his possession;" every such negro "shall be apprehended, and may be tried and convicted by a single Justice, who may order him to be publicly whipt at such time or times as he may think proper." We will not go into all the harsh and revolting provisions of this law, which the legislature has thus covertly contrived to maintain in its integrity, (by way of compensation, we presume, for their large concessions to public clamour at home,) but only observe, that the very fruits of the slave's garden, and the stock he may rear, are included under the term "any kind of merchandize," and which he cannot even possess with impunity, when off his master's plantation—the single exception which the law admits being, "such provisions as may have been given him for allowance." And yet under such circumstances, we hear the slave accused of a want of industry! Can industry possibly subsist under such restraint and insecurity?

9. Establishment of Savings' Banks.

The proposal of Lord Bathurst on this point has been acceded to; but under the circumstances in which the law of 1790 places the slave, and without a single day allowed him for his own purposes, what hope can there be that it will prove of any use to him?

10. Legalizing and Protecting Marriage.

The objections to the clause on this point are, as stated by Mr. Huskisson, that the power of celebrating marriages is confined to the Clergy of the Churches of England and Scotland, when it is notorious that the Methodists and Moravians have large numbers of slaves under their care in this Island; and that the slaves have no Protector appointed to aid them, and guard their rights.

11. Admission of Slave Evidence.

The Act of St. Christopher goes here also beyond that of Jamaica, in admitting slaves to give their testimony generally in any civil or criminal court. But then it makes their admission to depend on the certificate of a minister of the church either of Eugland or Scotland, unwisely and unnecessarily excluding the certificates of ministers of other deno-

minations, whose followers are both numerous and well-instructed. It is, moreover, a fatal defect in this Act (§ 6,) that it excludes slaves from giving evidence in any criminal or civil suit in which not only his owner, but his manager or overseer is concerned, or where any free person is charged with a capital crime. One great object of slaves being admitted to give evidence in Courts of Justice, namely, protection from the oppression of their masters and overseers, is thus wholly defeated. Indeed, in general, their concern is only with their masters and overseers, and their complaints must almost always refer to them. The exception, therefore, amounts, in fact, to an exclusion of them from justice in almost all the cases that to them are of any moment.

"The clause of the Act (§ 10) which imposes on the claimant the burthen of proof, in all cases where the liberty of a person retained as a slave is in question," Mr. Huskisson remarks, "would be of the highest value and importance, were it not for the subsequent provision, which reverses this rule of law, when the asserted slave has been in the possession of the claimant for three months before the claiming is preferred."—Here we have a farther illustration, in addition to those already given, of the dexterity with which a principle may be adopted in terms, and yet defeated in its practical operation; a species of dexterity in which West Indian Legislators appear to excel.

"The penalty on persons discarding their diseased or infirm slaves," and throwing them as it were on the public, which Mr. Huskisson says is conceived in the spirit of humanity and sound policy, is a measure of old date, which self-interest had led almost all the West-India Legislatures to adopt from an early period, as a necessary measure of self-

defence.

We might be thought unfair if we overlooked the clause (§ 5) which requires owners, &c. to use their endeavours to instruct their slaves in the Christian religion. But an enactment of this kind, without either sanction, or penalty, or provision for its fulfilment, is obviously of no use. It has stood for ages in many of the Colonial statute books,—in that of Jamaica since 1696,—in the very terms of the clause now before us, without producing, or being intended to produce, the very slightest results; nay, without having led in any one instance to the consecration of the sabbath to its proper objects. And, without a sabbath, what can be effectually done in promoting Christianity among the slaves?

After the above exposition of the nature of the new slave codes of Jamaica and St. Kitt's, for the accuracy of which we pledge all our credit with the public, our readers will recur with some surprise to the high eulogies which have been pronounced upon those enactments both in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons; and they will be curious to know by whose misstatements* the noble and honourable

[•] In like manner it was affirmed in the House of Lords, that a late Act of the legislature of Jamaica had admitted persons of colour to hold public offices in that island; whereas all that has been done is to remove the cruel disability under which they previously laboured of acting even as clerks to persons holding public offices.

eulogists could have been so far misled as to lend the authority of their high names, in the presence of Parliament and the public, to such incorrect representations;—representations directly calculated to convey to the Colonists, an unfair and injurious impression of the real desire of His Majesty's Ministers, to carry forward the work of reform.

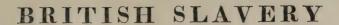
One word more before we conclude. The West Indians clamour and petition for inquiry into the state of their slave population. Nothing can be more reasonable. We too are anxious for inquiry; and are willing to rest that inquiry on the testimony of their own statute books and of their own returns, those honest, disinterested, impartial, and unrefutable witnesses both of their principles and their practice. To them we make our appeal, and by them we are willing to try the cause.

Anti-Slavery Office, July 8th, 1828.

BRITISH SLAVERY

DESCRIBED.

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DESCRIBED.

Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?

MALACHI, ii. 10.

Second Wdition.

NEWCASTLE:

PRINTED BY J. MORT, HIGH-STREET;

AND SOLD FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE LADIES ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

1828.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The object of this compilation is to give a general notion of the condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies to such readers as are not at present sufficiently interested in the subject to collect the information themselves from the numerous works in which it is scattered.

It is not intended to give a complete statement of the evils to which the Slaves are exposed, but merely to describe some of those by which they are most constantly oppressed.

The compilation is made from the following publications:—

Stephens' Delineation of Colonial Slavery.

Cooper's Facts illustrative of the condition of Negro. Slaves in Jamaica.

Bickell's West Indies as they are.

Wilberforce's Appeal in behalf of Negro Slaves.

A Picture of the Slaves Colonies.

Negro Slavery.

Account of a Shooting Excursion.

East and West India Sugar.

Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter.

BRITISH SLAVERY DESCRIBED.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen; to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke.

ISAIAH, lviii. 6.

The slaves employed on the sugar plantations in our colonies, male and female, old and young, are driven like cattle to labour by the cart whip; even little children are not excused, but from the age of seven are compelled to be at work in the field all day before the whip, or otherwise employed for the master. At this early age they are formed into gangs, of which the drivers are generally, though not always, women, "I have seen many gangs of little boys and girls at work in the field before the driveress (says Mr. Cooper*) who always had her whip, which even at this early period is something more than a mere sign of office, the little victims being doomed to feel as well as see it. well remember once riding up to a place where the children's gang was at work; the overseer, who was with me, thinking that the driver was not sufficiently vigilant, called out, 'What are you doing there Sir; What is the use of your having the whip unless you make use of it; Attend to them Sir.' The poor fellow instantly obeyed, and more than one of the little creatures felt the weight of his instru-

In preparing the ground for the cane plants, the slaves of both sexes are drawn out in a line, and close in the rear stand the drivers, each carrying a long thick and strongly plaited whip, the lash of which is as severe as those of our waggoners, ready to be applied to the back and shoulders of any who flag at their work, or lag behind the line. As the whole line advance together it is necessary that every

^{*} A Minister who lived three years in Jamaica.

part of the trench should be finished at the same time: if any were allowed to throw in the hoe with less speed or strength than their companions the trench would be imperfect. It is therefore the business of the drivers, who are slaves themselves and liable to be punished if a certain portion of work is not done, not only to urge on the gang with sufficient speed, but also to watch that all in the line, whether men or women, strong or feeble, old or young, work as nearly as possible in equal time and with equal effect, for as the whole line must, to use a military phrase, be made to dress as it advances, no breathing time, no resting on the hoe can be allowed to any one however exhausted. The use of the whip is usually left to the discretion of the driver, and bestowed with rigour on the weakest of the gang on any part of the naked body; and thus the weaker negroes are often overworked and obliged to

go to the sick house.

This labour is continued with the interruption of half an hour for breakfast and two hours for dinner, from morning till night throughout the year, except on Sundays and on a few days which they are obliged to employ in cultivating their provision grounds for their own support. In crop time, which lasts four or five months, they work not only ten or twelve hours a day, but also during half the night, or the whole of every other night. sible that in such a climate, the exaction of eighteen hours labour a day without even a Sabbath to recruit the exhausted frame (for we shall soon see that Sunday is no day of rest to the slaves) should not produce misery and death; But besides this severe day and night work, they are obliged after their day's work in the field is over, to collect grass for the horses and cattle. It is difficult to describe the hardship and vexatiousness of such a task at the close of a day of exhausting labour under a vertical sun. At about six o'clock they leave off work in the field, and each one having cut or picked a bundle of grass for the master's horses which serves instead of hay (an article not made in the West Indies) they take their way homewards, carrying the grass to a certain spot where they form a general muster, and there remain in the open air, often shivering with cold, till the cracking of the whip informs them that they are to take it to the stable, which is generally at about eight o'clock. Negligence in grass picking is a frequent cause of punishment; on some estates it draws more stripes

on the negro than all the other offences put together. It was stated in giving an account of the slaves field labour that they were not employed in it on Sundays, but we should be greatly mistaken if we imagined that Sunday is given them as a day of rest, or as a day devoted to religious duties, as Sunday in all the Colonies but three is the only market day for the slaves, the only day on which they can sell the vegetables and poultry they may have to dispose of or buy the little necessaries they may want in return. The distance of the market from their homes is often five, ten, or even twenty miles; and before they go to market they have to fetch their vegetables &c. from their provision grounds which are sometimes at a distance of ten miles from their huts.

Mr. Bickell, late curate of Kingston in Jamaica, who lived nearly five years in the island, says "I may be thought to exaggerate when I speak of Negroes travelling fifteen or twenty miles, loaded like mules, to market. It is, however a real fact. Many of them go a part of the way on Saturday evenings, and others travel all night to be in good time on the Sunday mornings. I myself met a great many men women and children, last year, on different Saturday evenings, at the distance of from five to fifteen miles from Kingston, proceeding there with heavy loads; and on many a Sunday morning I have met not less than three or four hundred, loaded like so many beasts of burden: they come-some from St. Thomas' in the East, a distance of thirty miles, so that these last have sixty miles to walk from Saturday afternoon to Sunday evening. I do not see what can be said in palliation of such harsh and unreasonable conduct towards humble dependants. When the great account—the grand assize comes, there will be a fearful reckoning unless such ways be reformed. would hardly work his horse or his mule so hard; and if Negroes have immortal souls, how can the total neglect of them be answered for?"

Besides this necessary labour for themselves on Sundays, the negroes are very often obliged to work in various ways

for their masters and the overseers on that day.

The master, or any one to whom he may delegate his authority, has the power to punish his slaves by a certain number of lashes, at his own mere will and pleasure, for any or for no offence. The poor wretch is thrown on the ground on his face, his legs and arms held firmly down by

other Negroes, and flogged on the naked body with the cart whip, with which the drivers, when told to cut as the phrase is, can easily inflict a gash at every stroke, so as to make a few lashes a tremendous punishment. Cutting does not merely mean drawing blood and peeling off the scarfskin, for those are the effects of almost every stripe on the naked body with this instrument, but it means cutting through the true skin into the muscles or flesh below; * and this is so usual in cart whippings when regularly inflicted for a serious fault, that confinement to the hospital for five or six weeks is an ordinary consequence. The floggings sometimes even prove fatal. In a recent case brought before parliament, a poor field-negro was literally whipped to death by the order, and in the presence of his master.

Mr. Bickell says "The power which every owner, or every overseer or other deputy possesses, of flogging his or her slaves or the slaves entrusted to their care, is a dreadful engine of oppression, and cannot be too soon abolished. Most of the overseers are too fond of flogging; and feel no more for the cries of a negro than they would for the howling of a dog. Unfortunately, there are many white savages in the West Indies (he is speaking now of masters and mistresses) who have no more feeling for a negro than for a dog; and who take every advantage to gratify their worse than Turkish disposition by cruelly flogging them for small offences. Just before I left Jamaica, I was very credibly informed by a respectable white person who lived near the scene of this tragedy in Kingston, that a negro had died a few days before from severe flogging. The case was this:the negro had done something wrong; and the master fearing to give him all the intended punishment at once, had him severely punished three several days following: the consequence was that the man was unable to do any thing more, but lingered a short time and died, undoubtedly from the cruel and repeated floggings. I believe the magistrates did not know of it; but if they had known most likely the master would have escaped, as he had taken care not to

^{*} Of the depth of these cuts we may form some notion by the description given of the healed wounds by Dr. Williamson, a zealous advocate for the West Indian System, who lived fourteen years in Jamaica. "If in a warm day we pass by a gang where they are uncovered, it is a reproach to every white man to observe in them the recently lacerated sores, or the deep furrows which though healed up, bear the marks of crucl punishment.

go beyond the legal number at one time; and if he had gone beyond, none but slaves were present at the punishment. (a) * It may be objected that thirty-nine lashes inflicted on a man for three days following would hardly cause death; but I can assure my readers that the whip in a strong man's hand is a severe instrument of torture. I had once occasion to send a stout hired slave of my own to the workhouse for punishment (on account of stealing from a shopkeeper, who complained to me) and I desired he might be given only two dozen. Though he richly deserved the flogging, yet I was sorry to see him when he returned, for he crept and rolled about the yard for some time, crying aloud, and was so much marked that he could scarcely sit or walk for several days."

In three of the Colonies the flogging of women has been discontinued since the late orders in Council, but in all the others they as well as the men, without regard to common decency, are thus publicly stripped and tortured at the will of the overseer or driver. In some of them indeed, this is not done quite publicly, as by a ludicrous pretence to decency the number of men who shall be present is limited to three—at the Cape perhaps to one, as there the flogging

is said to be done privately.

Sometimes the slaves are sent to the parish workhouse or gaol, where they get a severe thirty-nine at going in and coming out, and are worked in chains. (b.) Men and women are both treated in this way—they are sent to the workhouse without any order from a magistrate, by the mere desire of the master or overseer who may pro-

tract this punishment for any length of time.

On every plantation there are also stocks, in which a proprietor or overseer can place any of the negroes, for real or supposed faults, as often as he pleases. When a slave has offended more than commonly he is placed in them for a considerable time day and night; but sometimes he is sent to the field to work under the inspection of another in the day, and sent back to the stocks again at night; this is often done after a severe flogging, when they are suspected of being inclined to desert. A runaway belonging to the estate Mr. Cooper was on, being taken, was flogged in the usual manner as severely as he well could bear, and then made to work in the field; during the in-

terval of dinner-time he was regularly placed in the stocks. and in them also he was confined the whole night. When the lacerations produced by the flogging he had received were sufficiently healed, he was flogged a second time. While the sores were still unhealed one of the book-keepers told Mr. Cooper that maggets had bred in the lacerated flesh; he mentioned the circumstance to the attorney who did not show any surprise on hearing it. "Another young man," says Mr. Cooper, "a runaway, was at length caught, carried past our door as a prisoner, and lodged in the stocks of the estate. The poor fellow was of course severely flogged. After this he was kept in confinement every night for many weeks together, and at the intervals allowed for meals. At Christmas he was sent to the workhouse, while the rest were spending the only holiday which was allowed them during the whole year. When he was at work at the field in the day time he was not only responsible to the driver, but was placed under the eye of another slave who was considered as his guard. In these circumstances death came to his relief.

I will add a few instances of these arbitrary punishments, for little or for no fault, not taken from the accounts of the opponents of slavery, but from the report sent to Government by the legal officer for the Colony of Berbice.

A pregnant woman named Rosa was employed picking coffee with some other women. She had previously objected to working as being too big, but the manager had overruled her objection, and she went to pick coffee on her knees, being unable to stoop. Thinking they did not pick enough, the manager ordered the driver, Zondag, to flog them. When he came to Rosa he said, this woman is big with child. The manager replied "Give it her till the blood flies out." She was flogged with the whip doubled. This was on a Friday. She was sent to the field on Saturday, but being seized with pains in her loins was sent to the hospital. The doctor examined her and ordered her to the field again. On Sunday she was delivered of a dead child, after a severe labour. The child's arm was broken and one eye was sunk in the head. The driver, Zondag, and several others confirmed this statement.

Plantation Gelderland. Nettelje, Julia, Lea, and Mietje, each with an infant in arms, complain that no time is allowed them to nurse their children; that during the crop an equal quantity of coffee is required of them as from

other women having no children, or of the men; that a similar task is given them in weeding grass with the rest of the gang, which they are not able to perform in consequence of carrying their children on their backs; if they fail they are beaten with the handle of the whip. Nettelje and Mietje were weeding the dam with others the day before yesterday, they were seen by Mr. Toel the manager suckling their infants, he inquired if they had no work to do, they replied they had just taken their infants up who were crying; they were laid down and flogged; their coats were stained with blood.

In the following case the sufferer was not even accused of any fault. Complaint of the woman Minkie belonging to Thomas C. Jones, says "After I got home my master sent me to Mr. Henry; he would not buy me, he sent me to another gentleman; they both said my master asked too much money and sent me back. I begged for a pass to look for an owner; my master said no, he would flog me and give me more than the law allowed; I was then laid down and tied to three stakes; I got a severe flogging." Exhibits her body which was covered by a plaister, and apparently lacerated to that degree that the court judged it

expedient to direct her not to uncover it.

The brutal avowal of her master is worthy of record. Mr. Jones said, "he had flogged her and broke her mouth for her insolence. He had thirty-nine laid on her, and they were well inflicted. When he sent for her he had no intention of flogging her, but after sending her to three persons for sale and not succeeding, he told her she had often deserved a flogging; he then directed her to be flogged, and that they should be well laid on, which was done." His Honour the President and the Court, we are told, "were highly indignant at the treatment of this female, No evidence however could be obtained to convict the proprietor of having inflicted a severer punishment than that prescribed by law." It is added that "the Court were fully satisfied that the unfortunate female had been flogged in a most severe and cruel manner, and to her sufferings, by her master's own confession, was added the breaking of her mouth in a most brutal manner." In conclusion, her master was directed to take her from the custody of the under-sheriff on payment of the fees. She was returned, that is to say, into the power of this monster by order of the Court. Now let any one consider all the

horrors of this clear and unambiguous case of cruelty, and the impunity which has attended it, and then say whether the detestable system which can screen such conduct from justice is to be endured by the country. The savage master was not proved, it seems, to have offended against the law—this is true; for he had done nothing more than the law expressly authorised every master to do. At his own caprice, for no earthly crime that even he himself could specify, he lacerated "in a most severe and cruel manner" the naked body of this woman, but as it could not be proved that the number of stripes exceeded thirty-nine, however "well they were laid on," to use his own brutal expression of triumph, however deep they cut into the flesh, and though he broke her mouth besides, no punishment could reach him; nay, the law actually protected and sanctioned his crime.

In one only of the twenty Colonies is there any law * to prevent masters from selling their slaves separately, tearing families asunder, and selling father mother and children to different masters. It is felt by them as a grievous hardship, to be separated from their connections, or to be removed from places where they have long resided. It sometimes produces a species of rebellion: and has been known to occasion the death of many through the distress of mind which it occasions. The following cases will shew in how unfeeling a manner families are in fact separated by these sales.

Advertisement from the Cape Gazette of Oct. 12, 1822, "There will also be sold a female slave named Candasa, with her five children—Sophia, aged thirteen years; Eva, ten; Candasa, nine; Jannetje, seven; and Carlo, five; each to be put up separately.

^{*} The law of our Colonies in this respect surpasses in cruelty the code of the Foreign West India settlements. By the Spanish and the Portuguese laws husband and wife cannot be separated on any account whatever, except for crime. The Spanish law even enacts that slaves are not to be hindered from marrying with the slaves of other masters; in which case, if the estates are distant from one another, the wife shall follow her husband, whose master shall buy her at a fair valuation, (by appraisers) and if the master of the husband does not agree to the purchase, the master of the wife shall have the same facility. The same principle is made to regulate the sale of husband and wife residing on neighbouring estates, but belonging to different owners. By the code noir it is prohibited in the French Colonies to sell the husband without the wife, the parents without the children, or vice versa. In sales made contrary to this regulation, if voluntary on the part of the owner, the wife or husband, children or parent, though expressly retained by the seller, pass by the same conveyance to the purchaser, and may be claimed without any additional price.

On the 8th of August, 1823, seventeen individuals who were become escheats of the crown, were sold by public auction, and the proceeds of their sale paid into the Treasury of Great Britain-a cruel separation of families was thus sanctioned by the agents of the crown. The four first were a father and son, and a mother and son all sold separately. Then Abel, husband of Lubbok, and father of Thomas, Kitty, and Becky, sold to Henry Tudor. Lubbok, wife of Abel and mother of his children, was sold to the same man, but appears to have been put up separately, and Mr. Tudor appears to have bid high in order to obtain her. Thomas, son of Abel and Lubbok, aged sixteen, sold to H. Morley. Kitty, aged thirteen, daughter of Abel and Lubbok, to Joshua Levi. Becky, aged six, daughter of Abel and Lubbok, to Mr. Alsup. Betsey, mother of Caroline Grace and Medorah, is sold with the two youngest children, aged two years and a half and four years, in one lot, to James Lealted, but Medorah, aged nine, is sold to William Austin. Thomas and his three sisters all sold to different Thus the King of Great Britain has been made to enrich himself by the sale into perpetual slavery of seventeen of his subjects, whose dearest ties have been burst asunder by the process.

The following account is of a scene in the interior of the Colony of the Cape. "Having learnt that there was to be a sale of cattle, &c. by auction at a Veld Cornets in the vicinity, we halted our waggon one day for the purpose of procuring a fresh spann of oxen. Among the stock of the farm sold was a female slave and her three children. two eldest were girls, one about thirteen years of age, and the other about eleven; the youngest was a boy. whole family were exhibited together, but they were sold separately, and to different purchasers. The farmers examined them as if they had been so many head of cattle. While the sale was going on the mother and her children were exhibited on a table, that they might be seen by the company, which was very large. There could not have been a finer subject for an able painter than this unhappy group. The tears, the anxiety, the anguish of the mother, while she met the gaze of the multitude, eved the different countenances of the bidders, or cast a heart-rending look upon the children; and the simplicity and touching sorrow of the poor young ones, while they clung to their distracted parent, wiping their eyes, and half concealing their faces,

contrasted with the marked insensibility and jocular countenances of the spectators and purchasers, furnished a striking commentary on the miseries of slavery, and its debasing effects upon the hearts of its abettors. While the woman was in this distressed situation she was asked," Can you feed sheep?" Her reply was so indistinct that it escaped me, but it was probably in the negative, for her purchaser rejoined in a loud and harsh voice, "Then I will teach you with the sjamboe" (a whip made of the Rhinoceros' hide). The mother and her three children were sold to three separate purchasers; and they were literally torn from each other.

The following account given by Mr. Gilgrass, a pious Missionary, who witnessed the facts, will show what misery is caused by this separation of families. "A master of slaves who lived near us in Kingston, Jamaica, exercised his barbarities on a Sabbath morning while we were worshiping God in the Chapel, and the cries of the female sufferers have frequently interrupted us in our devotions. But there was no redress for them or for us. This man wanted money, and one of the female slaves having two fine children, he sold one of them and the child was torn from her maternal affection. In the agony of her feelings she made a hideous howling, and for that crime was flogged. Soon after he sold her other child. This turned her heart within her, and impelled her into a kind of madness. She howled night and day in the yard, tore her hair, ran up and down the streets and the parade, rending the heavens with her cries, and literally watering the earth with her tears. Her constant cry was, "Da wicked massa Jew, he sell my children. Will no buckra massa pity negar? What me do? Me no have one child!" As she stood before the window she said, lifting up her hands towards heaven, "My massa, do my massa minister pity me! my heart do so, (shaking herself violently) because me have no child. Me go to massa house, in massa yard, and in my hut, and me no see 'em." And then her cry went up to God."

One other instance I must give to show the intensity with which the negro mothers love the children who are so barbarously torn from them. The master of a slave woman who had three children, had repeatedly threatened to separate her from her offspring by selling them to a distant proprietor. Finding at length that he was about to put his threats into execution, the wretched mother carried her

children down to the shore, flung them all from the rocks.

into the sea, and precipitated herself after them.

By the just and humane practice prevalent in Mahometan countries slaves are only liable for any crimes they commit to suffer half the punishment to which a free man would be subject. This law proceeds on the ground of their not being supposed on a par as to knowledge of their duty with

other parts of the community.

This humanity is painfully contrasted by the revolting and almost inconceivable injustice of the criminal law in our self-called Christian Colonies, where the ignorance and civil degradation of the slave have been considered as arguments for treating his crimes with greater rigour than those of freemen as well as for denying him protection against the crimes of others. This principle has by several of the West India legislatures been distinctly avowed, for the uncivilized character of the unfortunate negroes has been made the apology for highly aggravating the severity of the penal laws against them; nay, even for giving impunity to their murderers. By these laws the slave is treated as a public criminal for a great variety of actions which are in their moral nature perfectly innocent, and not prohibited to free persons; and in other cases the punishment annexed to his offences are often far more severe * than those to which free persons are subject for the same violations of the law, many offences being even made capital when committed by a slave which in a free man are but petty larcenies, misdemeanors, or at most felonies with benefit of clergy. A few instances of this iniquitous respect of persons shall be given.

In Jamaica and St. Vincents, a slave assisting another slave to leave the island is punishable with death, while a white man for the same offence is punishable only by a fine of £300 currency, and imprisonment not exceeding twelve months, in Jamaica; and by transportation in St. Vincents.

In Jamaica, Barbadoes, and the Bahamas, it is enacted, that a slave who commits perjury in a criminal cause shall suffer the same punishment as the prisoner if convicted would have incurred. Thus a slave may be put to death for attempting by false swearing to save the life of another,

^{*} This injustice does not exist in the French Colonial laws, for M. Malonet (an apologist for slavery) finds fault with the code noir for subjecting the slaves in case of theft and other offences, to penalties as severe as if he had been of free condition.

for the punishment is the same for false testimony for or against the prisoner. The penalties of perjury in all our Colonies, when committed by free persons, are only imprisonment, pillory, or at most, transportation for seven

years.

By the latest meliorating act of Jamaica the attempt to poison free persons is made punishable by death, if made by slaves, but not otherwise; and the same punishment is imposed on all accessaries, with the express qualification, "being slaves." In St. Vincents, likewise, the attempt to commit a crime is punished in the same manner as the crime itself, if made by slaves, but not otherwise; as well as in many cases in Dominica; and in regard to mixing poison in the Bahamas.

In St. Vincents a slave is punishable with death for doing any personal injury to a free person—or holding meetings

for any unlawful or dangerous purpose.

In Grenada black men or women pretending to commu-

nication with the devil may be punished with death.

By the last Jamaica act, a fugitive slave going off, or attempting to go off the island, is punishable with death. (c)

In the Jamaica meliorating act of 1788, as corrected by farther improvements in 1792, it is enacted, "that if any slave shall offer any violence, by striking or otherwise, to any white person, or person of free condition, such slave shall be punished with death, transportation, or confinement, to hard labour for life, or otherwise as the court shall think proper to inflict; provided such striking or conflict be not by command of his or their owners, overseers, or persons intrusted over them; or in the lawful defence of their owners' persons or goods," so that a slave who should attempt to defend himself against a murderous weapon in the hands of a free person, though the aggressor possessed no public warrant or private authority over him, might be hanged for it, though he might lawfully defend his master's goods under the same circumstances. Selfdefence against white persons is a capital crime in many other Colonies also. Very modern acts have introduced or re-enacted this extreme injustice.

By the new ordinance of St. Lucia, slaves straggling without a passport are subject to penalties not exceeding one hundred and fifty lashes and three years hard labour in the

chain gang.

The following law was lately passed in the reformed slave

code of the Bahamas :- "Slaves receiving sentence of death or transportation shall be appraised and valued: but if it shall appear that the owner of any such slave had treated him or her with inhumanity, and that necessity or hard usage might have driven such slave to the commission of the offence of which he or she shall be convicted, then no valuation shall be made nor certificate granted; and the owner shall not be entitled to receive any allowance whatever for such slave from the public." Is it possible to read without amazement and horror, that though the convicted slave shall be proved to have been driven to the commission of his crime by necessity or hard usage on the part of his master—a master possessing absolute and uncontrollable power-yet that the law does not order his sentence of condemnation to be reversed or mitigated, but leaves him to be executed or transported, while the only punishment inflicted on the real criminal is, that he does not receive the value of the slave whose death or transportation has been caused by his own inhumanity.

In almost all the colonies, even in cases of atrocious cruelty and mutilation, where a jury may order the slave to be taken from his master, he is not to be made free but sold,

and the offender is to receive his price!

By a law passed in Barbadoes in 1825, it was enacted, that when a slave is condemned to death or transportation, if the owner shall desire to appeal (the slave himself has no right of appeal allowed him) the execution shall be staved for ten days, that such owner may have time to apply to the governor for a writ of error, and the judgment of the court of error shall be final. This law is repealed by the new consolidated slave law passed in October, 1826, so that now whatever reason there may be to think the slave unjustly condemned, this bloodthirsty legislature will not allow the owner ten days to prove the error; yet there was not previously much danger of his making an appeal without some grounds, as the court of error had the power to award costs against persons who might be deemed obstinate and vexatious for moving a writ of error without good cause. the same new law a clause is repealed which was passed in 1825, enacting that the capital executions of slaves should be by hanging only. The various horrors therefore described by Mr. Dwarris (d) as attending the conviction and execution of slaves, which were forbidden by the law of 1825, may again be practised. To the act repealing these

two clauses the governor has affixed his signature. The fact that a British governor has sanctioned a law containing two such savage clauses is a melancholy proof of the cor-

rupting influence of slavery.

By a law recently passed in Grenada it is enacted, "that the master shall only give twenty-five lashes for any one offence, on any one day, on his own authority. But if the owner thinks that the slave's fault though not cognizable by law, is of such enormity as to deserve a more exemplary punishment, he may carry the offending slave before one or more justices of the peace, who may direct such corporal punishment, not extending to life or limb, as the offence shall in his or their judgment merit;" and all this without appeal. What then are the crimes not cognizable by law (the West India penal laws as they affect slaves are surely sweeping and comprehensive enough) of which a slave can be guilty, which shall be of such enormity as to require that one or more justices shall have the power of inflicting on him corporal punishment to any extent short of life or limb? Is there not enough in this single enactment, to show not merely the uselessness but the criminality of continuing to commit the well-being of so many thousands of our fellowsubjects to persons capable of framing, apparently without a feeling of its cruelty and injustice, such a provision as this?

In most of the Colonies the slaves are liable to endure the greatest injuries without redress, their evidence in the cases most important to them not being received at all in courts of justice; and where it is admitted, it is often under such restrictions as render it nearly useless. In many colonies, only the evidence of baptized slaves is admitted. In many, a certificate of competency from a religious teacher is requisite: in some of them this certificate must be from a clergyman of the church of England. In some, a slave's evidence will not be received without a certificate from his proprietor the very person most likely to be interested in preventing the evidence from being given. Even under these and other restrictions, slave evidence is not received in some colonies against their masters in any case: in some, it is not received against any white in a capital case; and as far as the returns go which have been hitherto made to government, there are only four Colonies in which it is received in a capital case against their masters. It appears then, that in a very great proportion of colonies the master, and in several

of them any white man, may murder a slave with impunity though a hundred other slaves should be present.

The late Sir William Young, governor of Tobago, a zealous friend to slavery, says, in his report of October, 1811— "I think the slaves by law, have no protection against the abuse of power over them by free people. In this, and I doubt not in every other island, there are laws for the protection of slaves, and good ones, but circumstances in the administration of whatever law render it a dead letter. When the intervention of the law is most required it will have the least effect, as in cases where a vindictive and cruel master has dared to commit the most atrocious cruelties, even to murder his slave, no free person being present to witness the act. There appears to me a radical defect in the administration of justice throughout the West Indies in whatever case the wrongs done to a slave are under consideration; or rather, that justice cannot in truth be administered, controuled as it is by a law of evidence which covers the most guilty European with impunity provided that when having a criminal intent he is cautious not to commit the crime in the presence of a free witness. In the back yard of a jobber of a small gang for hire—in the workshop of each artizan or petty tradesman—and within every house the greatest cruelties may be exercised on a slave without a possibility of conviction. I should consider it as inconsistent with the respect and deference I bear to the sagacity of the august body for whose use this report is framed, to idly enlarge it with the enumeration of humane laws for the protection of slaves all rendered nugatory by the conditions of evidence required in their administration.

Though the colonists absolutely reject slave evidence against white men in so many important cases and admit it with so many cautious limitations in others, yet they all without exception admit the testimony of slaves against each other,* and make no scruple of inflicting the pains of death on them, on the unsupported evidence of a single slave. Do then the legislative assemblies wish white cri-

^{*} The French Colonial laws are much less unjust to the slaves than ours. By the code noir, the admission of the evidence of slaves was prohibited indeed both in civil and criminal causes, but it was equally prohibited against slaves as against freemen. The sovereign council of Martinique however differed so much in opinion from our colonial assemblies as not to be satisfied with this exclusion of a species of evidence which they knew to be essentially necessary to the interests of justice, and they petitioned the king to permit that such evidence might be received in all cases in which there should not be sufficient proof by free witnesses.

minals to escape, or blacks to be hanged unjustly?

The slaves have some kind of right of appeal when illused by their masters or overseers in many of their colonies; but as in most, if not all of them, they may be legally punished if they fail to prove their charges, they will generally be deterred by fear from making any. Lord Bathurst well observes that "the law ought not to authorise the punishment of a complaint simply because no conclusive proof is adduced to justify it." It should be proved to be "groundless or frivolous, if not malicious, before the party complaining is punished for preferring it." Such, however, are not the notions of equity prevailing in the Colonies, as it appears by acts lately passed in Grenada and Jamaica amongst others; nor alas, have these just sentiments lately prevailed in our own council, as an order of council of June 1824,

was passed in direct opposition to them!

The acts of Grenada and Jamaica both condemn a slave to be punished who shall make groundless complaints, and as in Jamaica at least (I don't know how the case may be in Grenada) they have very little chance of redress even when their complaints are well founded, it is probable that they are very seldom brought forward. Mr. Bickell tells us "I was once present at a sitting of magistrates at Port-Royal, when a complaint was laid by several female negroes and children, who through ill treatment had run away and had come to the magistrates for redress. The complaint was that they had not enough to eat and had been cruelly punished, for being domestic slaves they had pilfered a little provision; to the best of my recollection a little biscuit and a few plantains, or a yam or two from the store. For this they were severely punished by their mistresses order (e) by a stout male slave, who beat them with a stick or flogged them more than once. The two women who were the principal complainants, looked as if they had been half starved, and their backs were most cruelly mangled from their shoulders downwards. They were in such a state that I could not bear to look at them after the first sight, but turned my face away while the examination went on. The above cause of their being punished was elicited from themselves, and from their miserable and pitiable appearance it must have been sheer want and keen hunger that drove them to take a little food to satisfy craving nature. That their punishment had been much too severe was manifest to every one; but the principal examining magis-

trate had been appointed by a relation of the owner of these slaves, and was completely his creature; he was therefore inclined to throw a veil over the affair, he therefore asked the deputy-president of the workhouse whether a person receiving only thirty-nine lashes could have his back injured as much as the backs of these women; the man hesitatingly answered, "I dont know, Sir; but some people show marks much sooner than others: I have seen some that appeared but little injured after the punishment that the law allows, but others whose backs are soft I think might be as bad, or nearly as bad, as the backs of the complainants." "Ah," replied the justice, "Ah, you think so;" and after a few more words, for there was very little consultation (the other magistrate not caring to support a farce which he could not well prevent) they were ordered back to gaol again, with the understanding that their mistress should be spoken to. This was an atrocious case, for these negroes were cruelly maltreated—but no redress was obtained, and this too frequently being the case, the poor wretches do not very often lay their complaints before the partial justices for legal redress (as they get an additional flogging for bringing such a charge, if not well proved) but weep over and lament their hard and degrading lot in

An order of council of June 1824, enacts, that should the complaint of a slave to a magistrate that an illegal punishment has been inflicted upon him be proved, the accused shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £4 9s! but that should the complaint prove groundless or malicious, the magistrate shall return the slave with a written declaration to his master, who thereupon may punish him at his discretion, to the extent of twenty-five lashes; or if he thinks him deserving of a higher punishment, may refer the case to a proper tribunal. Now, as the assembly of Barbadoes have testified that a small number of stripes may be so inflicted as to amount to cruelty, what may we not expect will be the severity of these twenty-five stripes, which it is left to the discretion of the master to inflict on a slave who has subjected him to the indignity of being dragged before a magistrate. Such a law would absolutely seem to be contrived in order to prevent the slaves from ever bringing their complaints before a magistrate. Surely it cannot be supposed that false complaints by the slaves against their masters are frequent or probable mischiefs in the Colonies;

and as the vengeance of a master may make a slave completely miserable for the rest of his life, it was not necessary for the law with its penal lashes to come to his aid to protect him from a false public accusation by his slave.

From some late returns sent to government and from other documents, there is much reason to believe that their right of appeal is rather an injury than an advantage to the slaves, as it appears that they are generally very severely punished when they are unable fully to prove their complaints (and under their manifold disadvantages they must often fail even when their cause is just) and that their injuries are seldom redressed when they are admitted to be proved. The Fiscal of Berbice has lately given a return of his proceedings on the complaints of slaves, during four years, from 1819 to 1823. In three fourths of the cases he has neglected to give his decision; to about fifty cases it is annexed; of these it appears that only nine were so far decided in favour of the complainants as that they escaped punishment for having failed to prove their charges, and in forty-one cases the complainants underwent severe punishment (generally fifty or seventy-five lashes) by order of the fiscal, on the ground that their complaints were either unfounded or exaggerated; in short, that they had not been fully proved. Of these nine cases in which the complainants were not sentenced to punishment, and therefore must have been considered as having proved their charges, we know of only three in which any punishment was inflicted on the persons proved to have been guilty. Now certainly we cannot say that it is impossible that of fifty charges brought by slaves, forty-one should have been so groundless as to make it right that the accuser should be severely punished for having made them, and that in only three cases out of the fifty the master or overseer was worthy of punishment; but surely no one who considers under what difficulties of proof those charges were made, and at what a tremendous risk to the complainants, can possibly believe this to have been the case, or fail to perceive that the Fiscal's Court in Berbice is a mere mockery of justice. That of Demerara does not seem very much better; the Fiscals have only sent an account of their proceedings during three months, in which time seventeen complaints were made by slaves against their owner or manager. Four of these cases may be considered as decided neither for nor against the slaves; in two they obtained redress; in the remaining

eleven the complainants were punished. This proportion certainly discourages all representation of ill usage on the part of the slaves, but as the Fiscals have sent no details of the cases we can only guess as to the equity of their proceedings. The Missionary Smith, who resided in the Colony, had probably better grounds on which to form his judgment. He says, in speaking of the cruel treatment of the slaves in Demerara "If it be asked, are there not authorities to whom the injured slaves can appeal for redress? the answer is in the affirmative, but many of the legally constituted authorities are themselves owners of plantations, following the same system, and, perhaps, by means of their managers, practising the same abuses on their slaves. Judging from their conduct it would seem that some of them consider it a greater crime for the negroes to complain of their wrongs than for the master to inflict them. The complainants are almost sure to be flogged, and frequently before the complaint is investigated, if listening to the exculpatory tale of the master can be called investigation; and even when the cause is so evidently on the side of the complainant that it can neither be denied nor evaded, the decision is so studiously concealed from them that they scarcely know whether the law is to protect the oppressed, or to indemnify the oppressor; nor can they always solve this problem from the

That the attempts of the poor slaves to obtain redress are rather repressed than encouraged by those who are especially bound to protect them, the following statement shows to be too probable. There appeared in the newspapers of October 6, 1823, an official notification from Sir Ralph Woodford, governor of Trinidad, of his having punished two negro slaves, one with seventy-five the other with a hundred lashes, for a complaint against their master which he says upon investigation proved to be groundless; and he orders these tremendous punishments to be inflicted in the presence of deputations of ten slaves from each of the neighbouring estates, for the express purpose of deterring them from like offences. Surgeons are ordered to attend to moderate the punishment, if necessary; the extreme severity of it therefore cannot be doubted, even by those who do not know the tremendous powers of that West India knout, the cart whip; or that thirty-nine lashes is the ordinary limitation of a magistrate's power by the more recent slave laws. How could Sir Ralph forget that in all

the Colonies the danger must be infinitely greater, that cruel and fatal oppression should be unpunished and unrestrained from the want of a complainant or witness, than that masters should suffer by the groundless accusations of their slaves? It was obviously impossible so to discourage complaints which he believed to be false, without intimidating the poor slaves from bringing forward such as are true. It is probable that a great majority of the negroes who witnessed these solemn and tremendous floggings believed the sufferers to be innocent and their story true, and to them at least, if not to all, the practical lesson obvi-

ously was, "Beware how you complain."

Every where except in the British Colonies, the condition of slavery has had one great mitigation, the laws having not only permitted, but greatly facilitated and encouraged manu-In the British West India islands the codes of law are singular in their strictness as to voluntary manumission, and in the cruel restraints recently imposed on it. In most of the Colonies the manumission of slaves by their masters was wholly unrestrained till within the last thirty years, since which time several of the colonial legislatures have for the first time imposed, and others have greatly augmented, the fines to be paid into their treasuries on the enfranchisement of slaves. In some instances they were carried so high as to amount to a virtual prohibition in every ordinary case. They were raised in some Colonies, to £100; in Barbadoes, to £200 and £300; and in St. Christopher, to £500, and in some cases, £1000 on every slave manumitted. In Bermuda, in an act passed in 1806, it is enacted, that no slave owner shall emancipate a slave of forty years of age or under except upon condition of such slaves leaving the Bermuda islands within three months; and if they return, they are to be taken up, transported, and sold into slavery again. Those above forty may be unconditionally manumitted on paying a tax of fifty pounds.

These were not the only obstacles thrown in the way of emancipation. In Demarara, besides the heavy tax, the amount of which must be earned by the poor slave in addition to his price before he could achieve his liberty, he had to gain the consent of the Governor and Court of Policy, for without that the master could not free his slave even if he wished it; and if he attempted to do so he was subjected to a fine of a thousand guilders. These obstacles were only

removed by the order in council of 1826.

The government at home has lately recommended to all the Colonies to give the slaves the power of purchasing their own liberty, and that of their wives and children, at a fair appraisement. Not one of the thirteen Colonies which have legislatures of their own has complied with this request; and of the seven which are subject to the legislation of the crown, four have also refused compliance. St. Lucia, the Cape of Good Hope, and Trinidad, alone have consented: and in Trinidad the law has been rendered nearly useless by the unjust conduct of the planters who administer it; as they allow the appraisers (who are sworn to make a fair and impartial appraisement) to value the slave at a price double or treble the amount of what is his admitted and undisputed value in exchange in the market of the Colony, and in the ordinary transactions of commerce. Some of the other colonial legislatures have taken off the taxes they had imposed on manumission: it is impossible to say how many have done so, as many of the Colonies have not sent the returns

required by government.

Even when a slave has overcome all the difficulties which oppose his emancipation and has acquired his liberty, he may at any time be again made a slave for life if he cannot produce a certificate of his freedom; and a black who is born free is in the same situation. By various acts of assembly in different islands, unknown negroes or mulattoes are liable to be apprehended and kept in gaol without even the warrant of a magistrate; and unless they are claimed within a limited time by some owner who can prove them to be his property, or they themselves can produce legal evidence of their freedom, they are publicly sold by the provost-marshall. That free negroes are in fact often deprived of their liberty by proceedings under these unjust and tyrannical laws, there is abundant reason to believe. It is rare to find a Jamaica Gazette in which there are not advertisements of the names and descriptions of negroes detained in different prisons of the island, and to be sold under these laws, upon suspicion of being runaway slaves. A considerable portion of them will be found to have no known masters and to allege that they are free persons, yet they are to be sold at an early period, unless claimed by an owner, or proved by sufficient evidence to be free.

The following advertisements of sales by the keepers of

workhouses in Jamaica are instances.

Royal Gazette of Jamaica. Kingston Workhouse, May 28, 1824.

Notice is hereby given, that unless the undermentioned slave is taken out of this workhouse prior to the 26th of July next, he will on that day be put up to public sale and sold to the highest bidder, agreeably to the workhouse law in force for payment of his fees. William Hall, a Portuguese African negro, says, that he was sold on the coast when a boy to a Captain Roper, with whom he went to England twice and finally went away from him while there, and came to Jamaica in the Ship Duke, Captain Smith, as a servant in lieu of passage money, and has ever since been here.

Here then is a man who must have been free for many years, on whose services no individual in Jamaica pretends to have the slightest claim, who is taken up only because he is black, and put in gaol, and sold as a slave for the benefit

of the treasury of that island.

In September, 1826, the following advertisement appeared in the Royal Gazette of Jamaica:- "Unless the undermentioned slave is taken out of this workhouse prior to the 21st of November, she will be put up to public sale agreeably to the workhouse law now in force, for payment of her fees. Susannah —, formerly belonging to a Mr. Verdon, who left her to the late Mr. John Mishelly, tavern-keeper, in this parish, says, that since his death (about twelve months) she has had her liberty, and does not know who has now any claim to her, having always understood she was to be free." Surely, these sales of persons claiming to be free, their claim being uncontradicted by any human being, are direct acts of the slave trade which is declared felony by our laws, as much so as seizing free negroes in Africa. only of the Colonies is this iniquitous practice forbidden, by which free men living under the British crown may be sold into perpetual bondage.

That the difficulties thus cruelly thrown in the way of emancipation are not necessary to the safety of our Colonies, will clearly appear on observing the effects of the very different system prevailing in the Spanish Colonies, and under which they have been so happy and so tranquil. In them it has from an early period been the established practice to encourage the emancipation of slaves by means*

^{*} This plan is not a just one to the slave certainly, as, if his freedom is to be paid for, it ought to be by government, not by himself; but it is still a system very greatly to his advantage in comparison with ours.

which replaced the capital originally laid out in their purchase. The law provided that whenever the slave could pay his value to his master, he should be set at liberty. In these Colonies the slave was allowed the Sabbath as a day of rest, enjoyment, and attention to religious duties. On that day no labour was exacted from him by his master, nor made necessary for himself by the denial of other time for raising provisions and attending market, but he was allowed to recruit his strength for the labour of the other six. One day* in the week was farther allowed him to provide for his sustenance and that of his family, and about thirty holidays in the year besides. As soon as he has secured the provision of his family he was at liberty to turn his own time to the best advantage, to hire himself to his master or to whoever else would employ him, or to occupy + himself in cultivating such articles or in rearing such animals, as would command a sale at the next market. As soon as he had earned in this way the fifth part of his value, he was permitted to redeem with it one of the five days belonging to his master. This farther portion of time enabled him to acquire more rapidly the means of purchasing another day, and in the same manner the remaining ones, until the whole of his time was redeemed and his manumission completed. He then, if he had a wife and children, added his entire exertions to theirs during the time they could work for themselves, until they also were redeemed. He was allowed to purchase the freedom of an infant unborn for about forty-two shillings, and after birth for twenty-five dollars.

The master thus had his capital replaced without loss, and a peasantry was raised up around him accustomed to industrious exertion, to forethought, and to frugality—who had experienced the happy effects of regular and persevering labour in their deliverance from slavery, and in the comforts which surrounded them. No instance it is believed

+ In many of our own colonies, the slaves are forbidden to raise most of the articles which would be most useful or profitable to them, such as corn, potatoes,

cotton, coffee, ginger, tobacco, &c. or to keep poultry or stock.

^{*} The Spanish colony of Trinidad had scarcely come into British possession when a proclamation from General Picton reduced the time allowed to the slaves from a hundred and thirty-four days in the year to sixty-nine; namely, thirteen days, and four holidays, besides Sundays; and by the late order in council, the situation of the Trinidad slave is still farther deteriorated; for he is not now allowed to cultivate his provision ground on Sundays, and no days are given him in their stead. The comparison of the state of Trinidad under the English and Spanish governments is deeply mortifying to the proud and self-admiring Englishman.

has occurred in the Spanish Colonies of an insurrection on the part of these enfranchised negroes, or of their attempting to instigate such as remained slaves to any other means of deliverance than those which they themselves had so successfully pursued. Nor has it been only the internal peace of these Colonies which has been promoted by this arrangement, but they have been rendered almost secure against foreign aggression. Trinidad was the only Spanish Colony we were ever able to conquer, and that Colony had been settled on principles materially varying from the usual colonial policy of Spain. All the efforts of infuriated parties have failed on the continent of South America to excite the slaves to revolt against their immediate masters; and in Cuba, where manumissions have most abounded, there has been a perfect internal calm in spite of the hurricanes around them. In the Colonies of Holland and Great Britain on the contrary, where emancipations are the rarest, insurrections have been peculiarly frequent. In all the Colonies of Spain (except Cuba, where there are large annual importations of fresh negroes) the proportion of the free population has gone on increasing so fast, that the process has not only been easy but safe to complete emancipation. In the Spanish part of St. Domingo all are now free. In Spanish South America the numbers still in bondage form but a very small part of the whole black and coloured population; and measures have been adopted for the speedy and entire extinction of slavery amongst them. All this too has been effected it would seem, without any derangement of property, without any civil commotion, without any complaint on the part of the masters, nav, with their willing and cheerful concurrence.

There are no public schools or teachers for the slaves in our Colonies; and there is no act of assembly which obliges, or affects to oblige, the master to educate them. The school-master therefore does not supply what the ignorant negro parent is unable to impart; and it has never been pretended that any religious instruction is commonly given by the owner himself, by the manager, or any other person employed on the plantations. That the colonial legislatures have everywhere acquiesced in the criminal neglect of the master, the statute books of every island will attest. Acts have indeed been passed in Jamaica which enjoined masters to instruct their slaves, but without even the pretence of any punishment or remedy for the neglect of this idle in-

junction. Dominica has passed a like enactment, but General Prevost, the governor of the island, stated it in his official return to have been considered in the Colony only as a political measure to avert the interference of the mother country, and to have been wholly neglected in practice. By papers printed by order of the House of Commons in 1815 and 1818, it appears that in many islands there is not a church or a clergyman; and that in colonies in which the religious establishments are comparatively on the largest scale, it would be impossible for the fiftieth part of the slaves to have any benefit from them, even if the labours of the clergy were particularly directed to their instruction. In Dominica there is but one clergyman and one place of worship belonging to the established church. One church in St. Vincents, if it has been rebuilt since it was blown down by a hurricane in 1780. In Demerara and Essequibo there is one church and clergyman, for all the free inhabitants and 77,000 slaves. In Berbice, one Dutch clergyman and no English one. In Trinidad, no church nor church establishment. In Jamaica, the bishop states that in a population of 400,000 souls, there is only room in the churches for 11,500 hearers, and that the parishes in the interior are absolutely without the semblance of the forms of religious worship. In the Bahamas, comprising a great number of islands widely dispersed, there is one clergyman—one in the Virgin Islands.

On the whole, it is clear that no human zeal or industry could be equal to a tenth part of the duties of the parochial clergy were the slaves practically regarded as belonging to their flock, but the truth is, that with very few exceptions they have never been so regarded either by the government or the clergy. But this is not all of which the slaves have to complain in regard to religious instruction; some of the Colonial assemblies have not contented themselves with neglect and privation, but have persecuted those English Protestant Dissenters who for conscience sake have become the voluntary teachers of the slaves; and some have lately attempted* at least to persecute the poor slaves themselves

for their attention to religious duties.

In Jamaica the assembly lately passed a law making it penal for the poor slaves to contribute their mite to promote any religious object, or to aid in rescuing themselves from

^{*} The British government have not allowed these persecuting laws.

their state of darkness by any payment to religious teachers not of the Church of England, though by their own confession, it was impossible that the slaves should be taught

by the established clergy.

The assembly of Jamaica have likewise passed a law forbidding one poor slave to give instruction to another without permission from their owner and the quarter session, and also forbidding all meetings whatever for religious purposes after sunset, though until sunset the slaves are fully employed in the work of the field. The punishment annexed to these offences is hard labour in the workhouse, or a number of lashes not exceeding thirty-nine on the bare body, with that dreadful instrument the cart whip.

By another clause in this last act it is enacted, that it shall not be lawful for any dissenting minister, religious teacher, or other person whatsoever, to receive any money or chattel whatsoever by way of offering, contribution, or on any pretence whatsoever, under a penalty of twenty pounds for each offence, half to be paid to the informer

who is hereby declared a competent witness.

In Trinidad, the white proprietors of the quarter of North Naparema, amongst other iniquitous resolutions, have passed one declaring that any attempt to instil into the minds of slaves religious instruction or education beyond what they now possess (so long as slaves are property,) would be incompatible with the existence of slavery. Who would not think, on first reading this resolution, that it was an attack upon slavery instead of being a vote against religion? The missionary Smith, was asked by General Murray, the governor of Demarara, in what way he proposed to instruct the negroes. He answered, by preaching, catechising, and teaching them to read. The governor replied "If I ever know you teach the slaves to read I will banish you from the Colony."

The absolute necessity the slaves are under of devoting great part of their Sundays* to attending markets, work-

^{*} By the code of the French West India Islands, masters are forbidden to cause their slaves to labour on Sundays and holidays in any kind of work, on penalty that the master so offending, shall be subject to a fine, and to the forfeiture of the sugar so made, as well as of the slaves detected at work. Any negro markets are likewise forbidden to be kept on the said days, upon penalty of forfeiture of the merchandize that shall be brought to any such markets, besides a fine to be levied on the sellers. It has been stated in another place, that the Spanish and Portuguese slaves have likewise their Sundays entirely free from labour, and they are as well instructed in religion as the whites.

ing in their provision grounds, and other employments, would be an almost insuperable obstacle to their acquiring religious knowledge and religious habits, even if the means of doing so were within their reach. In one instance, where the kindly-disposed owner of an estate sent out a minister of religion for the sole purpose of instructing his slaves, and gave directions that they should be allowed to attend him whenever the business of the estate would permit, there were only ten or eleven times in the year when he found it possible to speak to them on the subject, as the unremitting labour to which they were condemned allowed them no other opportunities, for it would have been cruel to compel them either to attend divine worship on the Sundays already so fully employed in essential business, or to come to him for religious instruction on the one day in a fortnight allowed them for cultivating their provision grounds.

The recent appointment of bishops and additional clergymen it may be hoped will produce some improvement, but they have hitherto operated to a very small extent, and no new legislative measures whatever have been taken either by the crown or by the colonial legislatures for promoting the education and instruction of the slaves. And while Sunday continues to be legally desecrated by markets and labour, and while children from the age of five are kept in the field all day (as we learn from the Bishop of Jamaica's report) it is vain to talk of educating the young, or instructing the old. Something appears to have been done at the Cape of Good Hope alone, but what its amount is does not clearly appear. In three only of the Colonies have Sunday markets been forbidden; and in two of these the measure is rendered an act of severity to the slave by the non-allowance of time in lieu of Sunday.

By discouraging marriage, and by their own licentious conduct, the whites almost force the slaves to lead vicious lives. So great is this discouragement that in some islands marriage between the slaves is scarcely known. In the report sent from Tobago it is stated, that in that Colony no marriage of slaves has ever been celebrated. The governor of Trinidad, in a letter to government at home, even expresses his doubts of the propriety of the marriage of slaves! We are told by one clergyman of Grenada, Mr. Nash, that the legal solemnization of marriage amongst the slaves of that island is a thing unheard of: by two others, Mr. Webster and Mr. Macmahon, that no application had ever

been made to them to marry slaves, and that they had never heard of such a thing as the marriage of a slave.

In five years, ending December, 1825, there was one marriage of slaves in Barbadoes, one in Honduras, none in Ber-

bice, and none in Demarara.

To such an extent is the corruption of the female slaves carried on by the whites, that it is said by a minister who resided three years in Jamaica, "It is a heart-rending and dreadful consideration, that all the females out of a population of nearly 350,000 souls, should become the instruments of licentious gratification." This licentiousness in the negroes is the creation of the whites; for in Africa, as we learn from Mr. Park, the marriage vow is held sacred; and such is the strong influence of domestic attachments that unfaithfulness in marriage is less prevalent there than in Europe. In the West Indies the marriage tie is scarcely known; and the poor creatures having lost the elements of domestic happiness which they have in their native country, have sunk in their habits in this respect almost to a level with the brutes.

This is a faint and very incomplete sketch of the oppression exercised by Englishmen on 800,000 of our fellow creatures and fellow subjects. There cannot be a more indisputable proof of the severity of the suffering resulting from this tyranny, than the fact, that instead of increasing in number (as all people do, whether slaves or freemen, when they are not ground down by oppression or extreme want,) the slave population of our Colonies, taking the whole together, has decreased 28,000 in six years, that is, nearly at the rate of 5,000 a year. That this decrease is owing to the hardships endured by them cannot be denied, as their next neighbours the free inhabitants of Hayti, a people of the same race and living in a similar climate, have doubled their numbers in about twenty years. And it is not as a consequence of the inevitable evils of slavery that this decrease takes place: it is because our slaves suffer the unnecessary aggravations of excess of work, shortness of food, and cruel treatment, that they thus waste away. This is proved by the circumstance that the slave population of the United States increase at the rate of two and a half in a hundred every year. It is therefore indisputably true, that we not only for our interest hold our fellow creatures in unjust captivity, but that by our merciless treatment of them in that captivity, we kill them off at the rate of many

thousands every year. How many thousands are, literally speaking, slowly murdered by hard usage, exhausting labour, and insufficient food, and how many are prevented from being born by the pressure of these evils it is impossible to say; but this we do know, that if the slaves in our Colonies were only in as favourable circumstances as those in the United States, they would increase at the rate of 20,000 in the year, and that they do decrease at the rate of nearly 5,000 in a year. Much of this fearful difference can be only the effect of crime—crime committed in the Colonies, but in which, we in England are accomplices. The Colonists could not continue their guilty course if we did not allow it by neglecting to make laws to set free or even to protect the slaves—if we did not encourage them by buying the produce which is the fruit of cruelty and oppression -and if we did not even reward them by giving them a higher price for it than that for which we could procure the same articles produced by innocent and beneficial means. How much of this responsibility belongs to every individual who, knowing the circumstances, does not do what lies in his or in her power towards removing this greatest of all evils, we should all do well to consider. But even if we could persuade ourselves that we are not absolutely accessary to the guilt incurred in our Colonies, yet surely if we cared for the souls of our white fellow subjects or for the sufferings of the blacks, we should not be able to rest without doing our part towards putting an end to this body and soul destroying state of society.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

MR. COOPER tells us, he believes that the limitation of the number of lashes to thirty-nine is practically disregarded, wherever the overseer thinks the offence deserving of a greater punishment: "on this point I have had the repeated testimony of estates carpenters, bookkeepers, and overseers." One overseer told him, that a woman had disobeyed his orders, and he put her in the stocks by way of punishment. She complained to the attorney of this proceeding. He ordered her to be thrown down on the ground in the customary manner, and thirty-nine lashes were inflicted on her naked body; after which she was raised up and immediately thrown down again, and received thirty-nine lashes more applied in the same manner. Mr. ____, a book-keeper, mentioned the case of one man, a runaway, who received sixty-five lashes, after which he was put into the stocks: he added, that a morning seldom passed without four or five offenders on the estate being flogged, and sometimes even forty or fifty. When I observed to the carpenter that people ought to be careful not to go beyond the law when they punish the slaves, he said in reply 'But who is going to take any notice of it?' This I am persuaded is the conduct and feeling of most white people in the island upon the subject of punishing slaves. No white person employed in the sugar planting business will inform against another white person who may go beyond the bounds of the law in his conduct to the negroes. Even many of the magistrates refuse to take the part of a slave who may apply to them for redress, although the magistrates themselves are convinced the slave has been unlawfully punished. This I have heard some of the magistrates say.

NOTE B.

The following description of the punishment of working in the chain-gang is taken from a work called "A short journey in the West Indies," by Mr. Dallas, formerly of Jamaica, a zealous defender of West Indian slavery. "Runaways and negroes that are found straying, and do not give an account of themselves, or cannot, from not knowing how to speak English, are taken up and put into the workhouse. In this situation their labour is supposed to be so much harder than is their common lot, that negroes are often sent hither by their masters and mistresses as a punishment and ac-

cording to the supposed heinousness of their guilt the correction of the cattle-whip is superadded. These unhappy wretches (I have reckoned near a hundred linked to the same chain) are employed to dig and carry stones, remove rubbish, and to perform all the most fatiguing offices of the public. The chain, being fixed about the leader, is carried round the bodies of the followers, leaving a sufficient distance to walk without treading on each others heels; and to each it is secured by a padlock. As soon as they are thus yoked, the poor animals are driven out by a negro driver, attended by a white driver, both with cattle-whips in their hands. In the great number thus fastened to each other, without the least attention to the difference of age or of strength, it is not probable that an equal pace among them can be kept up through the day as they move about. are set upon a brisk walk, almost approaching to a trot, and woe to those whom fatigue first forces to flag. The never-ceasing sound of the cattle-whip long keeps a regularity in the slight sinking curve of the intervening links of the chain, but nature will return; the feebler will begin to pull upon the stronger, the intervening links will lose their regular curve; here they become stretched to their utmost, there they sink nearly to the ground; the weak add the weight of their exhausted limbs to the strong, and the strong tread upon the heels of the weak. This the drivers remedy as much as possible by their cattle-whips, till nature, quite worn out, is at last driven back to the workhouse."

NOTE C.

The attempt to escape from slavery, even when the fugitive does not leave the island, is thought by the white inhabitants to be worthy of death. A party of negroes who had escaped from a cruel slavery, established themselves in the mountainous district of Trelawney in the interior of Jamaica, where they built a town, and brought nearly two hundred acres of land into profitable bearing. They had planted it with cocoa, coffee, and canes, besides provisions, and had brought it into excellent condition; and were living peaceably, industriously, and comfortably, when, after quiet possession for eleven years, it became known that such a set of people were in existence in the back districts of Trelawney: an excursion was immediately resolved on by the white inhabitants in their neighbourhood to take them prisoners or kill them, and to destroy their habitations. sion took place October 26, 1824. Several young men volunteered their services, and without consulting the governor or the magistracy, they proceeded from Pembroke estate accompanied by a number of armed negroes, to attack the settlement. They were driven back, and a second expedition was sent by the magistrates, who killed some of the settlers, dispersed the rest, and destroyed their houses and provisions. The poor runaways being in want of provisions, soon returned to their town, and rebuilt some of their huts.

A third expedition was sent; and Captain Smith writes, Feb. 28, 1825-" I retook the runaway settlement this morning; but from their having received information of the advance of the maroons, I was not able to do the execution I expected. One man killed, and two women and two children taken." These poor creatures were not even accused of any other crime than that of having escaped from slavery; and it appears from the accounts of their enemies that they kept themselves at home, and did no injury to their neighbours. It is difficult to conceive how persons brought up in England could have so changed their nature as to have become capable of being concerned in such transactions as these. Can we think with too much abhorrence of a state of society in which men go out in cool blood to hunt down their fellow men as beasts of the field-in which a few overseers and bookkeepers could go out at their own will and pleasure, to shoot at their fellow men-and in which no more evil was attached to such movements by the whites than if they had gone out to shoot at game?

NOTE D.

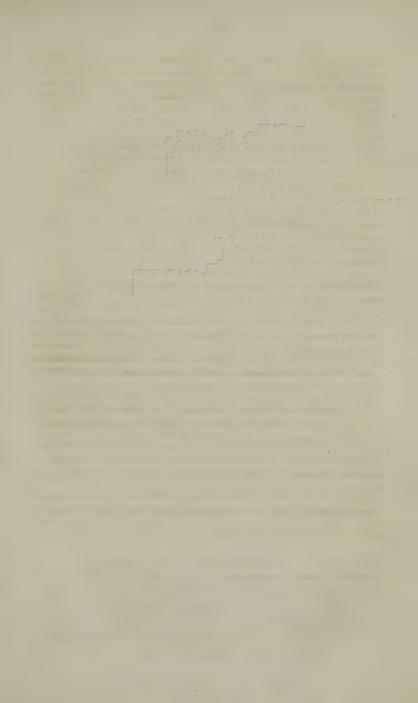
Mr. Dwarris is one of the Commissioners of Legal Inquiry lately sent by government to the West Indies: I am not in possession of his reports; but the nature of the horrors which the repeal of this clause may restore, may be judged of by the following extract from the evidence of the agent for Barbadoes before a committee of the privy council. "For capital crimes hanging is the punishment; but in cases of insurrection, the governor and council, as I have heard, sometimes inflict higher punishments, such as exposing negroes in a cage and starving them to death." Insurrection, however, is not the only crime for which an "exemplary death" (as it is called) has been inflicted in Barbadoes; nor is gibbeting alive, or what the agent called starving in a cage, the only mode of it. About forty-four years ago, Mr. Stephen was in that island for three days, and was present at a trial for murder, for which two negroes convicted of the offence were burnt alive. If the murdered party had murdered them, his punishment would have been a fifteen pounds penalty. The punishment of gibbeting alive, which is mentioned by the agent for Barbadoes, and which appears to be again made legal by the repeal of the clause of 1825, kept the convict in misery for at least a week, as we learn from the fate of Balla who was gibbetted alive about the year 1788, in Dominica; and from that of two men mentioned by Mr. Edwards as having undergone the same punishment in Jamaica. Mr. Stephen says, he was informed by respectable persons in Dominica that Balla was a week in dving; and Mr. Edwards who saw the two sufferers in Jamaica on the seventh day of their being on the gibbet (which was erected in the parade of the town of Kingston,) says "The next morning one of them silently expired, as did the other on the morning of the ninth day."

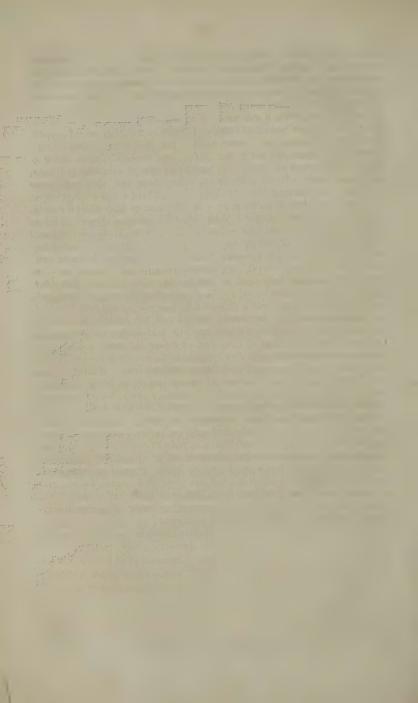
(History of the West Indies, published in 1793.) By the later meliorating acts of Jamaica and of Dominica, such cruelties are now forbidden; but the knowledge that they have been openly practised by Englishmen within the last half century, will help to illustrate the nature of slavery.

NOTE E.

A part of the subject which perhaps ought to excite us to exertion more powerfully than even the sufferings of the negroes could not be dwelt on this little work-I mean, the effects produced by the existence of slavery on the hearts and morals of the whites. fact, however mentioned by Mr. Bickell in the part of the text to which this note refers, offers an irresistible occasion of saving a few words of these effects on the hearts of women. In this instance a woman had ordered a punishment to be inflicted on these wretched famished slaves which no woman in England could have endured to see inflicted on a horse; and many instances of the same kind might be given even from the slender records we possess of what happens in the Colonies. I will add two from the Fiscal's of Berbice report. "Nine negro men complain against Mrs. Sanders of a great want both of food and clothing, One man says, he and three others went on one occasion to complain of hunger. Mrs. Sanders ordered them to be tied down and flogged with two drivers. It was on a Sunday. Supposes he had sixty. They are made to reap cassava and get firewood every Sunday till the greater part of the day is spent. Negro David says, that he is cow-minder to Mrs. Sanders; that lately one of the cows got sick, for which his mistress ordered the driver to tie him up as fast as he could, which caused dislocation at the time under which he is still suffering; that he there received one hundred and fifty lashes by his mistress's order, who afterwards locked him up in the stocks." "Jenny was pregnant: her mistress, Mrs. Elizabeth Atkinson kicked and trampled on her belly, locked her in the stocks, and beat her on the back. In half an hour she miscarried. Her child, Philip, is extremely ill treated, and is never allowed to come near her. The child is exhibited; marks of severe flogging over the whole body." Mr. Cooper tells us, "White women who are owners of slaves will, in general, without any scruple, order their slaves to be flogged, and some of them will even stand by to see them stripped bare and punished in the usual disgusting manner." The following are extracts of a letter from a Colonist at the Cape. "I have known ladies born and educated in England, charitable and benevolent in their general character, yet capable of standing over their female slaves while they were flogged, and afterwards ordering salt and pepper to be rubbed into their lacerated flesh! It is slavery -corrupting, hardening, brutalizing slavery-that produces this deplorable change in human feelings; and while it degrades to the dust the wretched victim of oppression, vitiates by a terrible re-ac-

tion, the heart and character of the oppressor. Never be kind nor speak kindly to a slave ' said an English lady at the Cape to a female relative of mine; 'I have found by experience in my own household that nothing but hauteur and harshness will do with slaves." Captain W. F. Owen, of the royal navy, gives the following account: -He was expressing to Senor d'Almeydra a merchant at Mozambique, his detestation of slavery, when the Senor replied, "You will not be long here before you change your sentiments. Look at my Sophia there. Before she would marry me she made me promise that I would give up the slave trade. When we first settled at Mozambique she was continually interceding for the slaves, and she constantly wept when I punished them; and now she is among the slaves from morning to night, she regulates the whole of my slave establishment—she inquires into every offence committed by them, pronounces sentence upon the offender, and stands by and sees him punished." In this last case, it is evident that the heart of the lady was as good and as feeling till she breathed the pestilential air of slavery as that of the Englishwoman who turns from her proceedings with disgust; and perhaps not one of the other women mentioned or referred to, would ever have been guilty of an inhuman act if they had not had the misfortune of living in a slave country. Many are the inconsistencies of the human character; but perhaps none is more surprising than that any persons who believe in God or feel for their fellow creatures, and who have not themselves been exposed to the influence of slavery, can support or refuse to aid in destroying a system which by an almost irresistible power condemns persons naturally as good as themselves to become such as we see they do become in slave-holding countries. By supporting the supposed cause of the planter, or by refusing our mite of assistance to that which is really his cause as much as it is that of the slave, we actively or passively help to keep in action a system which we know to be unceasingly at work in the creation of cruelty and of every bad passion of the human mind, as well as of profligacy and misery. And let us anxiously consider whether we who have not been exposed to the noxious influence of slavery, and have not the excuse of deep-seated and blinding prejudice to plead, shall not be more guilty than the slave-holders, if, when we become fully acquainted with the nature of slavery, we do not make an effort to rescue its white and black victims from its malignant power.





REASONS FOR SUBSTITUTING EAST INDIA,

FOR

WEST INDIA SUGAR.

IT is now seventeen years since the Slave Trade was abolished by the Government of this Country; but Slavery is still perpetuated in our West India colonies, and the horrors of the Slave Trade are aggravated rather than mitigated.* By making it felony for British subjects to be concerned in that inhuman traffic, England has only transferred her share of it to other countries. She has, indeed, by negociation and remonstrance, endeavoured to persuade them to follow her example; but has she succeeded? How should she, whilst there is so little consistency in her conduct? Who will listen to her pathetic declamations on the injustice and cruelty of the Slave Trade, whilst she rivets the chains on her own Slaves, and subjects them to all the injustice aud cruelty which she so eloquently deplores, when her own

^{*} For abundant proof of the present continuance of the Slave Trade by the Continental Powers, to an equal extent and with greater atrocity than ever, in spite of all the efforts of the British Government to prevent it, see, "Parliamentary Papers, relative to the Slave Trade, and Reports of the African Institution; or in a more abridged form, in a pamphlet entitled, "Statements Illustrative of the Nature of the Slave Trade;"

interest is no longer at stake? Before we can have any rational hope of prevailing on our guilty neighbours to abandon this atrocious commerce, to relinquish the gain of oppression, the wealth obtained by rapine and violence, by the deep groans, the bitter anguish of our unoffending fellow-creatures, we must purge ourselves from these pollutions, we must break the iron yoke from off the neck of our own Slaves, and let the wretched captives in our own islands go free. Then, and not till then, we shall speak to the surrounding nations with the all commanding eloquence of sincerity and truth; and our persuasions will be backed by the irresistible argument of consistent example. But to invite others to be just and merciful, whilst we grasp in our own hands the rod of oppression, what is it but cant and hypocrisy? Do such preachers of justice and mercy ever make converts? On the contrary, do they not render themselves ridiculous and contemptible?

But let us individually, bring this great question closely home to our own bosoms. We that hear, and read, and approve, and applaud the powerful appeals, the irrefragable arguments against the Slave Trade, and against Slavery, are we ourselves sincere or hypocri-

and another entitled, "Cries of Africa, to the inhabitants of Europe," by Thomas Clarkson; both published by Harvey, Darton, and Co. London.

For evidence of the injustice and oppression to which the Slaves of our West Indian Colonies and America are still subjected, see, "Stephen's West Indies;" Bicknell's West Indies as they are;" "Hall's and Fearon's Travels in America;" and the numerous pamphlets circulated by the Anti-slavery Society.

tical? Are we the true friends of justice, or do we only make a profession of it? To which party do we really belong? To the friends of emancipation, or of perpetual Slavery? Every individual belongs to one party or the other, not speculatively, or professionally merely but practically. The perpetuation of Slavery in our West Indian colonies, is a question in which we are all implicated; we are all guilty (with shame and compunction let us admit the opprobrious truth) of supporting and perpetuating Slavery. The planter refuses to set his wretched captive at liberty, treats him as a beast of burden, compels his reluctant, unremunerated labourer under the lash of the cart whip: Why? Because we furnish the stimulant to all this injustice, rapacity, and cruelty, by purchasing its produce! Heretofore, it may have been thoughtlessly and unconsciously; but now this palliative is removed:—the veil of ignorance is rent aside; -the whole nation must now divide itself into the active supporters, and the active opposers of Slavery; there is no longer any ground for a neutral party to stand upon.

Our knowledge on this subject must not end in exclamations, in petitions, and remonstrances. There is something to be done as well as to be said;—there are tests to prove our sincerity, sacrifices to be offered in confirmation of our zeal. One in particular, (but it is in itself so small and insignificant, that it seems almost like burlesque to dignify it with the name of sacrifice,) it is, abstinence from the use of West Indian Productions; Sugar, especially, in the cultivation of which, Slave labour is chiefly occupied. Small however, and

insignificant as the sacrifice may appear, it would at once give the death blow to West Indian Slavery. When there is no longer a profitable market for the productions of Slave labour, then, and we fear not till then will the Slaves be emancipated.*

Reason and eloquence, persuasion and argument, have been powerfully exerted; experiments have been fairly made; facts broadly stated, in proof of the impolicy as well as the iniquity of Slavery, to little purpose; even the hope of its extinction, with the concurrence of the planter, or by any enactment of the Colonial, or British Legislature, is still seen in very remote perspective; so remote, that the heart sickens at the cheerless prospect. All the answers have now come in from the different West India Legislatures to the humane propositions of his Majesty's ministers, by which it appears, that the former will do nothing effectual; that there is a determination to evade or resist all amelioration, and much more every step that has emancipation for its avowed object. There seems to be no hope for humanity, but in the use of force by Government (which would not be desirable); or in the virtue of the English people, which would shew their abhorrence of the planter's system by leaving off the use of their produce.†

^{*} See second report of the Anti-slavery Society, and "Cropper's Relief of West Indian Distress;" in which the beneficial effects of a fall in the price of Slave grown Produce, (arising from a diminished consumption) upon the condition of the Slaves, and its immediate influence in promoting their gradual emancipation, are clearly proved, and admirably illustrated.

"Yes, (it may be said) if all would unite in such a resolution; but what can the abstinence of a few individuals, or a few families do, towards the accomplishment of so vast an object?" It can do wonders. Great ends often result from small beginnings. Your resolution will influence that of your friends and neighbours;—each of them will in like manner influence their friends and neighbours; the example will spread from house to house, from city to city; till, among those who have any claim to humanity, there will be but one heart and one mind, one resolution, one uniform practice. Thus, by means the most simple and easy, would West Indian Slavery be the most safely and speedily abolished.

Should any still be discouraged with the idea that little good can reasonably be expected to result from individual abstinence from West Indian produce, let them reflect, that the most astonishing effects of human power have been accomplished by combined exertions; which when individually and separately considered, appear feeble and insignificant. Let them reflect, that the grandest objects of human observation, consist of small agglomerated particles; that the globe itself is composed of atoms too minute for discernment; that extended ages consist of accumulated moments. Let them reflect that greater victories have been achieved by the combined expression of individual opinion, than by freets and armies; that greater moral revolutions have been accomplished by the combined exertion of individual resolution, than were ever effected by acts of Parliament.

The hydra-headed monster of Slavery will never be

destroyed by other means than the united expression of individual opinion, and the united exertion of individual resolution. Let no man restrain the expression of the one, or the exertion of the other, from the apprehension that his single effort will be of no avail. The greatest and the best work must have a beginning; often it is a very small and obscure one. And though the example in question should not become universal, we may surely hope that it will become general.

It is too much to expect that the matter will be taken up (otherwise than to make a jest of it) by the thoughtless and the selfish: what proportion these bear to the considerate and compassionate, remains to be ascertained. By these we may reasonably expect that it will be taken up with resolution and consistency. By christian societies of every denomination, who are sincere in their profession of the one religion of universal compassion, which requires us "to love our neighbour as ourselves," this testimony against Slavery may be expected to be borne with scrupulous and conscientious fidelity.

Note.—We are now paying in bounty to keep up the prices of Sugar, and in establishments and armies, to keep the slaves in subjection, about three millions annually! And all this we are distinctly told by the planters is not sufficient. Three millions more according to their estimates must be given them to afford even a moderate remuneration; which altogether would make an expense to the country of eight pounds on every slave held in bondage. See Second Report of the Anti-slavery Society.

The protecting bounties and prohibitions, apply to various articles,

That abstinence from West India Sugar alone would sign the death warrant of West Indian Slavery, is morally certain. The gratuity of from one to two millions annually paid by the people of this country in bounties on West Indian Sugar, is acknowledged by the Planters to be insufficient to bolster up their tottering system; and they scruple not to declare to Parliament, that they may be ruined, if the protecting duty against East India competition be not augmented.

One concluding word to such as may be convinced of the duty, but may still be incredulous as to the efficacy of this species of abstinence, from the apprehension that it will never become sufficiently general to accomplish its purpose. Should your example not be followed; should it be utterly unavailing towards the attainment of its object; still it will have its own abundant reward: still, it will be attended with the consciousness of sincerity and consistency; "of possessing clean hands," of having "no fellowship with the workers of iniquity;" still it will be attended with the approbation of conscience, and doubtless with that of the

but chiefly to Sugar, which is the great Production of our West India Colonies; they are:—

- I. A bounty which is paid on the exportation of Refined Sugar, and which raises the price of all sugar in the home market, about 6s. per cwt. above its natural price, making an annual sum of £1,200,000.
- II. A high duty of 10s. per cwt. above what is paid from the West Indies, imposed on Sugar, the produce of the British dominions in India.

Great Searcher of hearts, who regarded with a favourable eye, the mite cast by the poor widow into the treasury; and declared, that a cup of cold water only administered in christian charity, "shall in no wise lose its reward."

III. Prohibitory duties on Sugar grown in all other parts of the world.

These bounties have enabled the British Planters to be absent from, and to neglect their own concerns, and to delegate to others the tremendous responsibility of their situation. This characteristic of the British system is the fruitful source from which many of its peculiar evils arise. The colonies of Spain and Portugal have been compelled to support themselves: they have neither had bounties on their produce, nor the expenses of a standing army paid by the mother country. Their system of treatment is more mild, they encourage emancipation, and have vast numbers of free labourers; and these are the countries which are underselling the British Sugar planters in all the markets of Europe.—See a paper, "On the Impolicy of Slavery."

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

DEMERARA MEMORIAL,

AND ON THE

FALSE ASSUMPTION,

THAT ENSLAVED BRITISH SUBJECTS

ARE

LEGAL CHATTELS.

London:
Printed by Littlewood and Co.,
Old Bailey.

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ARE

LEGAL CHATTELS.

IN

A LETTER

FROM A GENTLEMAN IN THE COUNTRY,

TO HIS FRIEND IN LONDON.

LONDON:

SAUNDERS AND BENNING, LAW BOOKSELLERS, (SUCCESSORS TO J. BUTTERWORTH AND SON,)

43, FLEET-STREET.

1829.

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PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

As long as the friends of the unfortunate Negroes continued thoughtlessly to admit that they were legal chattels, it required no great penetration to foresee that the compulsory manumission clause would be objected to as an arbitrary invasion of the rights of private property. Every one is aware that even a horse and, à fortiori, a slave, may from circumstances be worth much more to the possessor than the marketable value; and by the hasty publication of the following hints just before the hearing on the

Demerara Memorial, the writer had hoped to convince those who might wish to uphold the manumission clause that they could only expect success by abandoning details and calculations, and taking their stand upon the ground that the pretended ownership asserted by the slaveholders had no legal foundation, A moment's reflection was sufficient to establish the conviction that it was impossible to sustain the manumission clause, or the demand that a day in the week should be given up to the negro in lieu of Sunday, or indeed any other of the ameliorations which had been suggested, unless the prevalent notion that our dark coloured fellow subjects are not men, possessing absolute rights of their own, but mere beasts of burthen whose time and labour belong to another, were first put down. To justify the interference on behalf of the negroes at all, and certainly to render that interference effectual with the King and Council, it was necessary to shew that they were not the chattels of their oppressors, but injured British subjects illegally plundered of their liberties. This course, however, for some unexplained reason, was not approved: had it

been adopted it is not probable that any public functionary would subsequently have spoken of "those rights of property which the laws have vested in the owners of the slaves." Perhaps few persons will more sincerely rejoice to learn that the legislature of this country has never arrogated to itself the power of destroying the natural rights of harmless British subjects, and that consequently no such laws exist, than the amiable gentleman to whom the inadvertent assertion is ascribed. If it could be shewn that laws so utterly at variance with all principle, so perfectly satanic, had been enacted by any oversight, the ministers of the crown would betray their duty to their King and to their country if they allowed a single week to elapse without proposing their abrogation.

To the great surprise of many persons, and to the severe affliction of some, after a lapse of time during which no progress had been effected, the hopes of the ameliorators were at the end of the session 1828, made to rest in both houses of Parliament upon the delusive resolutions of 1823, which it is clear, from the whole tenor of Mr. Canning's speech, were framed by him

with the concurrence of the West Indians, on the assumption that our enslaved fellow subjects are legal chattels, and which moreover were dexterously interlarded with the convenient phrases "slave population"—" judicious and temperate measures"—" safety of the colonies"—" a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of all parties"—every one of these phrases being admirably adapted to become the source of endless discussions and to create those delays on which alone the white colonists place their reliance. The slave-holders are either very ungrateful or very politic in not openly expressing their satisfaction at seeing this great question referred back to their own false principle by their professed opponents, after five years of anti-slavery meetings and petitions. They know that they have little to fear from holiday speeches about cruelty, for they do not themselves desire to encourage atrocities. They can have no objection to occasional skirmishes on mere incidental points, that, like a tub thrown to the whale, enable them to draw away the public attention from the main question, which is, WHETHER ONE BRITISH SUBJECT CAN BE

LEGALLY COMPELLED TO BECOME THE SLAVE OF ANOTHER BRITISH SUBJECT; for they are aware that until that delusion is removed, no serious impression can be made on their system in parliament or out of it. How is it then, and why is it, that we hesitate to place our cause on its true footing, and to strike a decisive blow where alone the enemy is vulnerable? Is this ineffective mode of proceeding to be allowed for ever to absorb the public energies, and to neutralize them? The ministers (to whom the enslavement of innocent British subjects must always prove a very embarrassing question, while West Indian influence is so powerful) and the West Indians themselves are much obliged to us; but the improvement of the condition of the negroes, while we are thus trifling, can advance but little. The retrograde movement * towards the resolutions of 1823, at

^{*} Since the above was written, the Author has been given to understand that the two gentlemen who took the resolutions of 1823 as the basis of their simultaneous speeches, only stated their own views as individuals. In this case, as their speeches were so reported in the newspapers as to convey the impression that they had been requested to act as the special representatives of the anti-slavery party on that occasion, the erroneous impression should be removed by direct disavowal. But if these gentlemen

the end of the last session, has called forth the present re-publication, in order to afford those who might otherwise despond, the consolation of knowing that the pretended vested interest the great impediment to all amelioration must fall at once whenever it shall be made the object of direct attack, and the friends of the negroes shall cease to carry on a petty war of out-posts. Slavery cannot, and ought not to be resolved into a mere debate of kindness or cruelty: it involves that most important of all constitutional questions—the personal liberty of the subject; and it places the eternal interests of the wretched thrall at the mercy of a wrongdoer, who must in his heart deprecate all genuine improvement in religion as tending to give mind to one whose brutalization is necessary to the security of his tyranny. It is much to be regretted, that at any meetings for petitioning against the enslavement of British subjects, the occasional severity of their treatment, which is only matter of aggravation, and is

did not represent the anti-slavery party, who did? Nothing else was done, after all our subscriptions, our meetings and our petitions.

easily denied, palliated, or disclaimed, should have been allowed to supersede the consideration of the utter illegality of the usurpation itself. West Indian cruelties, in all their details, are most usefully exposed in publications intended to give a due impression of the attendant and inseparable evils of slavery, but they do not furnish proper materials for petitions to parliament: there the remedy must be sought by the application of fundamental principles, to the fact, that in the British colonies unoffending British subjects are condemned to perpetual bondage by thousands and hundreds of thousands. When the pretended vested interest has been thus exploded, the abolitionists may expect to realize the wish of the late Lord Melville for the emancipation of all the children that shall be born thenceforward, and the ameliorators, without laying themselves open to be represented as "a set of artful men, thrusting themselves into notice by making experiments on the property of others, and delighting in interviews with ministers of state," may then boldly insist on their plans for improving the condition of the existing negroes

whom, not on account of their oppressors, but for their own sake, it might not be prudent too suddenly to set free. Because parliament, evidently misled by the erroneous assumption, that innocent men may be lawfully deprived of their natural rights, confined itself to the resolutions proposed in 1823, it has been since urged in excuse for not adopting a more efficient course, that we must be content with keeping parliament to its own pledges and promises,as if six years' experience of the delusive nature of those resolutions had made no change in the opinions of the legislature. Why we should take it for granted that our representatives are unable to comprehend the paramount nature of absolute rights, which even a peasant can be made to understand, is not very obvious let us at least give them a fair trial before we affirm, that the most enlightened legislature upon earth is so profoundly ignorant as to know nothing of first principles, merely because many of its members have evinced a very proper reluctance to go along with us in our experiments after we had admitted the proprietary rights of the slave-holders. Before we

ascribe a want of intelligence to them, let us show, that we ourselves have at length discovered that there is a real difference between an outraged man which every British subject may be, and a legal chattel which no British subject can be; between forcible usurpation and lawful possession; between might and right; between fact and principle; between a slave de facto, and a slave de jure.

In addition to the authority of Blackstone, whose Commentaries are quoted in this pamphlet, as embodying the uniform opinions of all his learned predecessors on this subject, the writer cannot deny himself the pleasure of here inserting the testimony lately given to the legal principle on which the whole question depends, by one of the most considerate and accomplished lawyers of the present age, who is represented to have said in his place in parliament— "I agree with the Hon. Baronet that every subject of the state has a right to life and liberty, and that the government that would invade those rights would not only violate all law, but would be acting on a principle whose operation must destroy that government itself; but to

deny public offices to persons holding opinions injurious to the state, is quite another thing from the deprivation of natural rights."—Speech of Sir N. Tindall on the Catholic Question, May 5, 1828.

A LETTER.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE professional studies of my early life, long disused and in part forgotten, are not necessary to enable me, or I should imagine any one else, to estimate the true character of the memorial which the planters of Demerara and Berbice have presented to His Majesty in Council, praying to be heard against the order for permitting the negroes to purchase their own freedom or that of their near relatives. Indeed, you would not have stood in need of any opinion of mine on the subject, if, as generally happens to most persons, your attention had not been drawn aside from the consideration of first principles by the distracting variety of minor topics which are commonly introduced whenever the system of negro slavery is brought under consideration.

You have perhaps heard it asserted by some pert lawyer, whose ideas cannot rise above the

floor of his own court, that parliament is omni-

potent, and that in the language of Lord Stowell, when deciding the case of the negro Grace, "Innumerable acts of parliament have passed which regulate the condition of slaves, which tend to consider them as mere goods and chattels, as constituting part of the value of estates, as liable to be taken in execution for debt," &c. &c. All this is true, but it is not true that parliament is omnipotent: that expression means with those who really understand it, nothing more than that the authority of an act of parliament cannot be questioned in our courts of justice. But constitutionally, and in point of fact, the representatives of the people possess no powers beyond those with which they are invested by the electors; they would go out of their commission if they were to pursue any object palpably and intentionally opposed to that public good which they are delegated to promote and protect. The welfare of the community is the end which the parliament is bound to keep in view, and always proposes to keep in view, although it may occasionally mistake the means. The legislature possesses no arbitrary powers which it can wield in the mere spirit of wantonness and usurpation. The representatives of the people are not sent to the House of Commons to destroy the public happiness, but to preserve it: they have never

pretended to any right to adopt any other line of conduct; and whatever may have been the defects, or even the partial injustice of particular acts of parliament, those acts have always been framed ostensibly for the benefit of the community. Wherever that presumption fails, the power of parliament finds its limit; and I need not observe to you that no presumption of public advantage could be assigned as the ostensible basis of an act of parliament for violating all law, and destroying the natural rights of innocent British subjects. The legislature of this country has never attempted, has never desired, to pass an act imposing the condition of slavery on unoffending individuals; if it had so lost sight of its competence and its duty, the names of those individuals must at all events have been inserted in the act. True it is, that owing to the negligent manner in which the representatives of the people have performed their obligations, West Indian dexterity has found means to slip clauses into statutes in which slaves and slavery are spoken of in general terms, and referred to as actually existing; but this makes no man in particular a slave; it points to every body, and of course to nobody. Even if parliament possessed the will and the competence, something far more specific than this vague and side-wind kind of legislation would be required to destroy the

liberties of a single individual. My Lord Stowell certainly parades these indirect recognitions of slavery with sufficient ostentation, but he has been careful not to make any other use of them in his judgment. Fortunately for his Lordship's convenience, it was assumed on both sides, that the woman Grace was a slave when she quitted Antigua, and he had only to determine whether a voyage to England and back had by some magical operation changed her into another person. How she became originally a legal chattel or slave and lost her natural rights, by what law or principle his Lordship was not called upon to consider. By that decision the erroneous and strange notion that there is something in the air and soil of England which gives to a human being who happens to visit this country new natural rights, has been happily exploded — but it goes no further. The truth is, the natural rights of the woman Grace always were, and still are, as positive, as sacred, and as paramount as they were while she resided in this country—the only difference is, that she is now where those rights find no protection, as would be your case and mine if we were imprisoned in a cave of banditti. You will bear in mind, therefore. that when legislators of West Indian origin or connection talk of a power in the law to convert innocent human beings into chattels, they are

merely seeking to mislead the public by assuming as a fact that which is the real point in dispute. When judges talk in this manner the case is widely different; for although they may know the fact to be otherwise, they cannot in their judicial capacity dispute the authority of statutes in which it is incidentally taken for granted, that British subjects are brute beasts. In matters connected with West Indian property and transactions, therefore, the occasional decisions of English Courts of Justice prove nothing more than that they properly confined themselves to the subject immediately before them, and did not wander into speculations upon the illegality of slavery, when the question was not, and could not be raised. My Lord Stowell, therefore, cannot mean to say that the condition of slavery has been created, and imposed on certain individuals by "the most solemn assurances of our law;" his Lordship must have intended only to assert, as he does elsewhere rather more strongly, it is to be hoped, than the fact will warrant, that colonial slavery has been "favoured and supported by our own courts, which have liberally imparted to it their protection and encouragement"—an assertion which might be made with at least equal truth by the learned judge if he had been sitting at Algiers, though with that people it would be qualified by an exception in favour of their own fellow-subjects * and fellow-worshippers.

No judge in that half-civilized country would speak of any class of his fellow-subjects "as "having come slaves into the world;" no master would initiate his slave in the mysteries of his faith, with any intention of denying him his future freedom. To baptize and rob the helpless — to refuse to fellow-subjects their birthright, belongs, it seems, to this country, as the peculiar distinction of a people who send bishops to christianize their colonies, and who view with jealousy every invasion of their liberties. The full-length and highly-finished portrait which my Lord Stowell has exhibited of our indirect and conniving laws and criminal customs, in deciding the case of the "mongrel Grace," as she is termed by West Indian courtesy, is no doubt startling, and will have little tendency to gain us respect among the nations of the civilized world; but it may yet rouse the dormant virtue of his country, and render the last

^{*} The first and most natural division of the people is into aliens and natural born subjects. Natural born subjects are such as are born within the dominions of the crown of England, that is, within the ligeance, or as it is generally called, the allegiance of the king; and aliens are such as are born out of it. Allegiance is the tie or ligamen which binds the subject to the king in return for that protection which the king affords the subject. (Blackstone, b. i. c. 10.)

act of his lordship's judicial life the most useful, if not the most brilliant.

Let us see, however, whether it is exactly the fact, that our great legal authorities have so "liberally imparted to slavery their protection and encouragement." Lord Talbot and Mr. Yorke, when Attorney and Solicitor-General, gave it as their opinion that "the master's property in his slaves is not determined or varied by their coming to Great Britain." Here, as in the case of the woman Grace, the original condition of slavery is taken for granted. On the same assumption, they were both of opinion that "the masters might legally compel their slaves to return to the plantations:" in this they were mistaken, because the assumed dominion could not be supported in this country; and this mistaken opinion, given in their capacity of counsel in their chambers, does not prove any thing as to the favourable disposition of our courts. The Lord Chancellor Northington, so far from evincing an inclination to "favor and support" slavery, affirmed, that "as soon as a man sets foot on English ground (that is, as soon as he comes within the jurisdiction of our courts) he is free." And Lord Mansfield, in express terms, declared that "slavery is so odious, that it cannot be established without positive law," having in view. no doubt, when he made even this admission.

those peculiar cases in which convicts have forfeited their natural rights by some criminal act. But my Lord Stowell, in combating this dictum of the Chief Justice, "trusts that he shall not depart from the modesty that belongs to his situation, and he hopes to his character, when he observes that ancient custom is generally recognized as a just foundation of all law." Unfortunately for his Lordship's position, the practice of enslaving innocent men does not partake of the character of law, but of outrage. As to the custom of Antigua, where the woman Grace was held in slavery, Lord Stowell, who seems anxious to illustrate his own assertion, that slavery has been favoured and supported by our courts, does not venture to affirm that it is a good custom, but ingeniously observes that "fifty years have passed without any authorized condemnation of it in England as a malus usus in the Colonies." Where, indeed, is the judge that would dare to maintain in direct terms that a custom originating avowedly in rapine, and continued by usurpation and terror, is a good custom? Where is the judge that would even pretend that the law of custom can have any application except to things inanimate or brutal, which possess no inherent and paramount rights of their own to conflict with the claims of an asserted owner? The law of custom, aiming at the repose of society, and in the absence of a better rule, takes effect in things controllable by the general interest, and requiring to be permanently settled; on such objects it operates where it finds length of possession and a presumable lawful origin. But to talk of custom, in opposition to the natural rights of human beings, and the fundamental principles of civil associations, is to betray a strange oblivion of the elements of all law. Custom, in such a case, can do this, and nothing more — it can deprive the authorities that have connived at the evil practice of the right to punish it.

It is to be regretted, that a judge so accomplished as my Lord Stowell should have allowed an expression to escape him which has been construed into a sneer at the ameliorators, when he alludes to the "indulgence which has been shown to their efforts." But the enemies of slavery may justly ascribe to themselves a large portion of the hostility which is entertained towards them. Instead of proving that the pretended proprietary-right of the slave-holder has no legal existence - instead of distinguishing between a slave de facto and a slave de jure - instead of justifying our interference by showing that the negroes are not cattle and live stock, but outraged British subjects, possessing the same natural rights as their oppressors, we have gone on perpetually inter-

meddling, without having first established our right to intermeddle. In a judicial mind, such a course of proceeding naturally excites disgust. Let us take, for instance, the proposal that the slave-holder shall be compelled to give up to the negro one day of the week (that is, one sixth of his value) in lieu of Sunday - this proposal is palpably dishonest, on the supposition that the negro is a legal chattel. It is only on the ground that the negroes are not private property, but oppressed British subjects, that the enemies of slavery can pretend to interfere, except in such cases of flagrant cruelty as would justify our interference with a man in the streets of London for ill-treating his horse; and those are cases which the colonists themselves. and the local governments must be expected to correct. What would be thought of a prosecutor on an indictment for horse stealing, who, instead of proving that the thief had got possession of what did not belong to him, should admit that he had a vested interest in the animal, and only call witnesses to prove that he rode the stolen horse too hard? Of what avail is it to show the government and the colonists that we possess an influence second only to that of the catholic association, and have power to call forth or to keep back petitions from every part of the country, if after having displayed our strength we are to content

ourselves with keeping up an endless conflict respecting matters of comparatively trifling import? In the mean time we make ourselves enemies. Persons of acute minds perceive that we abstain from adopting a line of operation that would carry all before it, and we ought not to wonder if they suspect our motives. Taking, perhaps, an unfriendly view of our movements, they imagine that the present interminable warfare may give consequence to individuals among us, and they think it strange that we do not prefer the open and manly course either of disproving the asserted vested interest of the slave-holders, or if we cannot do that, of remaining quiet until we have digested some plan for giving them a full and satisfactory indemnification. Men of the world, and especially men of judicial habits, do not readily comprehend that kind of philanthropy, which first admits a vested interest, and then seeks to fritter it down by indirect means till it becomes valueless. They are aware that there is no analogy between our circumambulatory proceedings and the progressive means adopted by the Catholics, because, in their case, no asserted proprietary claims are first to be disposed of, and because they are not in pursuit of natural rights, which are positive and paramount, but of civil concessions, which are matter of favor, and admit of gradation.

The slight sketch contained in these pages, is the result of reflections occasioned by the efforts of the slave-owners at the late general election, and the dangerous and highly unconstitutional tendency of the arguments by which writers and speakers in their interest endeavour to sustain their cause. The gratuitous transfer of eighteen millions sterling, in extra price, within the last twelve years, from the pockets of the British public, into those of the West Indian planters, by means of a monopoly, which was conceded as a boon to the slave-holders in 1815 — the refusal of a former administration to encourage competition, by granting a charter for the cultivation of sugar by free labour in British India, and at a much cheaper rate, are evils of comparatively less magnitude than the insidious sacrifice of true principles which has been made at the shrine of negro slavery. As long as it is taken for granted that one innocent British subject may be converted into the legal chattel of another British subject, the ameliorators must be put continually in the wrong.

It may be proper to add, that the inadvertent designation of unoffending aliens, and British subjects, as "slaves," in some of our Acts of Parliament, actually intended for their benefit (an oversight, of which the advocates of slavery take full advantage), and the unguard-

ed admissions of the friends of the negroes in their speeches in the House of Commons, where, in replying to Mr. Dundas on one occasion, even the late Mr. Fox spoke of British subjects and foreigners as private property, sufficiently evince the necessity of recurring to first principles, in dealing with a question on which early impressions and long custom operate so strongly to confuse our preceptions. To the expression, "British subjects, or aliens held in slavery," there could be no objection, since they are so held in point of fact; but the term "slave" is highly exceptionable, as it implies a condition not liable to question or doubt - a condition of civil death, lawfully imposed for some offence committed, and is, by no means, a correct description of innocent individuals, who have done nothing to forfeit their natural rights. Among the ancients, subdued enemies were considered as having incurred that forfeiture; but in the present times, and in the present instance, the advocates of negro slavery must show, that a British subject becomes a felon because he happens to be robbed, and a convict because his liberty is violently and unjustly taken from him; that, in short, justice requires no better evidence of a man's legal condition than an opprobrious appellation. For the word "slave," let the words "unoffending Englishmen and foreigners" be substituted, and then will be understood the real value of a recent and much relied on averment, that "the personal traffic in slaves resident in England had been as public, and as authorized in London, as in any of our West Indian islands, for much the greater part of the last century." The villany of the practice is immediately laid bare by the substitution of the proper designation of the parties sold; and far from giving a legal character to the transaction, the precedent no longer conveys any impression to the mind, except that West Indian intercourse, and West Indian parliamentary influence, had destroyed our morals, and classed us among the most unprincipled people on earth.* But where is the statute that gives to any description of His Majesty's subjects the power of converting innocent human beings into slaves? Lord Stowell with all his zeal has cited none. All his Lordship can do, and he does his utmost, is to sum up in the following words—" Having adverted to most of the objections that arise to a revival of slavery in the colonies, I have first to observe that it returns

^{*} The word "slave," so improperly and inaccurately assumed on all occasions, is the sole pivot on which every apology for the oppression of our dark-coloured fellow-subjects in the West Indies is made to turn, exemplifying, in the strongest manner, the truth of the proverb, "Give a dog an ill name and hang him."

upon the slave by the same title by which it grew up originally. It never was in Antigua the creature of law; but of that custom which operates with the force of law,"—that is to say the custom of violating all law, is law. O lame and impotent conclusion of a most elaborate judgment! In this way his Lordship evades giving any opinion respecting the title itself, and simply determines that the original condition of the woman Grace, whatever that might be, had not been changed by a voyage across the Atlantic and back.

My Lord Stowell, who leaves the rights and the sufferings of our dark-coloured fellow-subjects entirely out of the question, proceeds to say that "The time may come when this institution may fall in the colonies, as other institutions have done in other flourishing countries; but I am of opinion that it can only be effected at the joint expence of both countries, for it is in a peculiar manner the crime of this country; and I rather feel it to be an objection to this species of emancipation, that it is intended to be a cheap measure here by throwing the whole expence upon the colonies." Are we to understand, then, that because England and the colonies have united in plundering innocent men, the criminal practice ought to go on until the robbers can adjust their claims against each other, upon breaking up the unrighteous part-

nership? What have the poor sufferers to do with this? what has honesty, truth or justice? It may, however, tend to lower the tone of the advocates of a system handed down to us from the days of the pirates and Buccaneers, if they are reminded that under any arrangement in the nature of that equitable compensation on which they insist as a preliminary to every concession, the negroes have claims far better founded than those of the white colonists, who would probably be brought in debtors on striking a balance between the purchase money, and the long arrear due to the black colonists for unrequited labour. The Trinidad order in Council having another object in view, overlooks the services of the negro in calculating the compensation under the compulsory manumission clause, and therefore in some instances he will have wrought out his cost-price two or three times over beforehand; yet even this, it seems, is not sufficient to satisfy colonial avarice - it pays better to work the human cattle till they die. A very few years of service without wages will generally be found to have absorbed the price given for the negro British subject; and as to those who were bred upon the estate, it is plain they would not have been kept except on the supposition that they were earning more than their scanty food and clothing. Even the advocates of the usurpers, when it suits their

purpose, admit them to be such close calculators that they usually attempt to justify the practice of enslaying the children also, on the pretence that they would be left to starve by the planter unless he were allowed to squeeze a profit out of these helpless creatures by converting them into slaves. And here let me pause one moment on the black atrocity of the system. It is trueit is true then that an innocent British born child is made a slave to prevent his perishing for want, because his wretched parents are robbed even of that scanty portion of their own time and their own labour which in those fertile regions would enable them to maintain their offspring. All England would start with horror if it were proposed to convert into slaves the unoffending children of the most guilty felon that ever suffered by the hand of justice, - but these are the children of innocent parents, who are themselves held in slavery only because they are unprotected, who are unprotected because they are poor, and who are poor, not because they are profligate, but because they are plundered.

I need not occupy your time unnecessarily, in disproving the bold assumption that the lands in the West Indian colonies cannot be cultivated by free labour, or in holding up to merited scorn and contempt arguments which more than insinuate that the benefit arising to one British subject in getting his land cultivated without

paying for it, is a perfectly good reason for depriving hundreds of other British subjects of their rights and liberties, and of all that renders life desirable. I will not impose on myself the superfluous task of setting a mark on individuals whose pernicious doctrines go to palliate and perpetuate robbery in its most extended and complicated form, accompanied with cruelties and sufferings, which every succeeding year find their consummation in the premature deaths of thousands of innocent human beings. Neither will I pay so ill a compliment to your understanding, as gravely to address myself to the work of demolishing the absurd position, that the power of holding the king's subjects in slavery was guaranteed to the planters in the conquered colonies when the right of regulating their municipal affairs by their own laws was conceded to them under their respective capitulations.* It would be equally harsh and im-

^{*} It hath been held, that if an uninhabited country be discovered and planted by English subjects, all the English laws then in being, which are the birth-right of every subject, are immediately there in force. But this must be understood with very many and very great restrictions. Such colonists carry with them only so much of the English law as is applicable to their own situation and the condition of an infant colony: such, for instance, as the general rules of inheritance, and of protection from personal injuries. The artificial refinements and distinctions incident to the property of a great and commercial people; the laws of police and revenue (such especially as are enforced by penalties); the mode of maintenance for the established

politic to impose on the inhabitants of a foreign colony, surrendering by capitulation, the necessity of becoming acquainted with the laws of England, as their future guide in conducting the ordinary transactions of life; but the reservation of a right to be governed by their own laws, whether conceded to a colony or a corporation, does not include the power of invading the natural rights of third parties, or of legalising robbery and murder. These are not in the discretion of the grantor. Indeed, to every argument founded on the pretended right of the white colonists to enslave their black fellowsubjects, because they are permitted to make their own domestic laws, it would be a sufficient answer, that a regulation or enactment, which singles out any number of individuals, to deprive them of their natural rights, is not a law

clergy; the jurisdiction of spiritual courts, and a multitude of other provisions, are neither necessary nor convenient for them, and therefore are not in force. What shall be admitted and what rejected, at what time and under what restrictions, must, in case of dispute, be decided, in the first instance, by their own provincial judicature, subject to the revision and control of the king in council: the whole of their constitution being also liable to be new-modelled and reformed by the general superintending power of the legislature in the mother-country. But in conquered or ceded countries, that have already laws of their own, the king may indeed alter and change those laws; but till he does actually change them, the ancient laws of the country remain, unless such as are against the law of God; as in the case of an infidel country. (Blackstone, vol. i. p. 107.)

but a sentence. If that sentence deprives innocent men of their labour and their liberty, it is a robbery; if it deprives them of life for attempting to resist the robbery, it is a murder. Whenever this happens, it is not law that is in operation, but superior strength acting on principles subversive of all law.

The slave-holders, I understand, triumphantly assert, that the judgment of Lord Stowell has established their right of property in human beings. His Lordship neither has nor could have established such a right; and it may, perhaps, check their exultation to intimate, that it would become the duty of the same Judge to hang them at the Old Bailey if they were to attempt to acquire similar property by similar means out of the limits of their own unrighteous precincts, where alone robbery can plead its privilege. Little more than a year has elapsed since my Lord Stowell tried a master of a vessel for his life, on the charge of having bought or sold negroes in another quarter of the globe. Let not the buyers and sellers of men within the islands, therefore, plume themselves too hastily on the decision of a venerable Judge exercising an appellate jurisdiction, upon a particular case in which the fact of the original slavery by birth and servitude was assumed: let them not flatter themselves that a personage, so profoundly versed in the law of nations, and the principles of the British constitution, would

venture to maintain, in his legislative capacity as a peer of the realm, that either the colonial assemblies, in their petty municipal jurisdictions, or the parliament of England, in the plenitude of its more extended powers, can possess the moral or the legal competence to annihilate the natural rights of unoffending foreigners, or of innocent Englishmen, and wantonly to inflict upon them all the miseries of a living death. But as slavery exists, in point of fact, in many of our colonies, you have, perhaps, been told that it is too late to recur to first principles, and that our present business is to endeavour to ameliorate the condition of the sufferers. In answer to this, I must observe, that when the advocates of cruelty and usurpation, not content with resting their case on the existence of a state of things no longer capable of sudden alteration, proceed to describe their fellow-subjects as lawful property, and to oppose every suggestion for the mitigation of their hardships and the gradual extinction of the criminal practice itself, by arguments, which reduce human beings to mere chattels and objects of traffic, it becomes necessary to bring their fallacious sophistries to the test of first principles, in order to clear the way to amelioration. The maxim that the law of the strongest is the law of civilised man, and that a helpless and unfriended

British subject may be lawfully and effectually compelled to become the slave of another British subject, more affluent than himself, would, if it were true, present a formidable bar to all right of interference on the part of the enemies of slavery. It is also of importance that the ameliorators themselves should keep first principles constantly in view, for otherwise their proceedings must want a basis; and in their eagerness to attain some partial good, they will be in danger of being surprised into concessions, which may embarrass them at a future period.

Avoiding, therefore, all abstruse discussion, and only anxious to place the subject in a clear and simple light, I shall, while adverting to the Demerara Memorial, endeavour to show you, that neither conquerors nor capitulants, neither colonial assemblies nor English parliaments, have abrogated, or can abrogate, the natural and inherent rights of the negroes; and that on arriving in this country, where their freedom is unquestioned, they do not acquire new rights, but merely land upon a shore where an invader of those rights would be arraigned as a felon.

At the same time, I shall deem myself fortunate, if any observations contained in this letter should have the further effect of awakening your attention to the mischief that may arise to our own liberties at home, from the unaccountable thoughtlessness of the electors of England, in returning to parliament men who hold their fellow-subjects in slavery, and those, not less dangerous representatives of a free people, who are always ready to sympathise with and support the slave-holders. Of all such persons, it is no more than charitable to suppose, that they are enemies to liberty from principle, and not from profligacy; that they are conscientiously convinced, that the rights of the poor and helpless ought not to be opposed to the emoluments of the rich and powerful; and that the production of sugar on certain estates is of more consequence than the preservation of the great fundamental principles of the British constitution, and of the rights of mankind. How far men, who have been accustomed to buy and sell the liberties of their fellow-subjects at public auction, or by private bargain, are the most proper to be delegated to the House of Commons, as the guardians of our freedom, I leave to your consideration; but I do not hesitate to say, that they are not more unfit to be entrusted with that high office, than those inauspicious declaimers among us, who, unbiassed by colonial education and colonial profits, appear to love slavery for its own sake, and distinguish themselves as the most ardent partisans of the iniquitous system, without any assignable motive, unless it be a natural predilection for all oppression, of which they are not themselves the objects, — an exception which is enshrined within the bosom of every tyrant, and of every abettor of tyranny. Persons of this stamp talk willingly of compensation to the slave holder, for the interests of wealth are their interests; but of compensation to the slave for years of labour stolen from him, — for his children sold away to strangers,—for days of toil, and nights of sorrow, — they never speak. It is enough that his case can never be their own.*

Four years and a half have elapsed since those memorable resolutions were moved in the House of Commons, by the minister of the crown, on the faith of which the abolitionists acceded to the request of Mr. Canning, that the business of ameliorating the condition of the negroes and men of colour in the West Indies, should be left in the hands of the executive government. On that occasion the foreign secretary stated, that the government had a right to expect from the colonial legislatures a full and fair co-operation, and that any resistance which might be mani-

^{*} The writer does not know that this passage could with justice be applied to any individuals now in the House of Commons—it attaches rather to a class of politicians who have at length passed away, and to a description of persons out of Parliament, who, though very ready to do mischief by dealing out their ignorant and selfish notions, are not, correctly speaking, politicians or any thing else.

fested to the express and declared wishes of parliament—which should partake not of reason. but of contumacy—would create a case upon which His Majesty's government would not hesitate to come down to parliament for counsel. This case has arisen; and it must be borne in mind, that although Mr. Brougham, appealing to the past experience of twenty-six long years, warned his eloquent opponent of the delusion of expecting any real or solid advantage to the negroes from measures originating in the colonial assemblies, the King's minister, notwithstanding, when he rose to qualify and explain other parts of his speech, made no reservation in the supposed case of contumacy, and gave an irrevocable pledge to the British public. Since that period, the colonists have continued to evade or oppose the wishes of government; and more than four years of accumulated miseries have hurried to a premature dissolution thousands of the unhappy negroes, whose sufferings are usually regarded by the advocates of slavery in this country with so much tender consideration for the white colonists, who are the authors of their calamities, and such a convenient oblivion of the utter desolation of the victims. In Demerara the waste of life among the enslaved population, in proportion to the births, has been proceeding at a rate that in fifty-three years would unpeople, the earth; and yet the proprietors and mortgagees of that colony, instead of obeying the Order in Council, have petitioned to be allowed to raise questions, which the abolitionists are told cannot be mooted without danger, and to be indulged with still further time, while they bring evidence to prove the number of pounds, shillings, and pence that they might individually lose by respecting His Majesty's commands.

The memorialists of Demerara do not obey the order of the sovereign, and then crave leave to prove their consequent losses, and their right to compensation; but with a boldness which they perhaps could better explain than I can presume to do, they take upon themselves positively to refuse to comply with the royal mandate, and, in return, ask permission to justify their contumacy, by showing the pecuniary damage to which they might have been subjected if they had conformed to the requisitions of the King. They think probably, but, as I hope, mistakenly, that they can perceive in this permission to prove their possible loss in excuse for their actual disobedience, an acknowledgement of the principle, on the part of government, that a sum of money is a fair set off against the happiness, the liberties, and the lives of 75,000 human beings in that colony, and that nothing more is expected of them than to make it appear that the pecuniary injury to

themselves would not be less than they have asserted. While this slow and debateable process is going on, years may be added to those already lost, and the claims of justice postponed to a more convenient season. It does not appear to be their immediate concern, neither do they seem to be aware that it can be the concern of the King's ministers, that injured British subjects and unoffending aliens are perishing in consequence of the delay.

The direct and sullen contumacy of the other colonists, in rejecting the eight bills sent out by Earl Bathurst, though equally audacious, is certainly less insulting to the government and to the nation, than the request of the Demerara proprietors to be heard before the King in council, on a plea which assumes that in England, as well as in the West Indies, gold is to be weighed against the natural and inviolable rights of innocent men, and even against their lives.* The memorial of the Demerara Colo-

^{*} The chief objections of the planters of Demerara and Berbice to the general policy of adopting the clause in the Trinidad Order on the subject of manumission are in substance:—

^{1.} That their right of property in their slaves rests on the same foundation with every other description of property known to the law.—In a former statement by the Court of Policy of Demerara, it is asserted that "the slaves in this colony are chattels as much as any other moveable property; the interest of an owner in his slave being that of fee simple absolute."

^{2.} That the order is a departure in principle from that wise and sound maxim, pronounced (they say) to be so by home au-

nists implies this expectation, or it has no meaning whatever. With the tendency of the order in council, as it may affect the general interests of the empire, the memorialists have no more concern than any other class of His Majesty's subjects who are not called to rank and station as the official advisers of the crown. The memorialists can only pretend to be heard on the consequences to their particular interests which might result from the measures commanded by the King. They tell the father of his people, therefore, that 75,000 of his subjects in Demerara belong to them as chattels and farming stock, and that they are as entirely without the pale of his protection, and at their mercy, as any other moveable property. They tell the sovereign of a free people, that his interference on behalf of his outraged subjects is a departure from a rule which, wherever it

thority, which has enounced that "the condition of the slave is only to be improved through the medium of his master."

^{3.} That in the lowlands of tropical climates steady labour in the sun is only to be obtained by means of coercion; therefore the cultivation of the West Indies could not possibly be maintained if the slaves were converted into freemen; as in that case they could not be induced to labour beyond what was required to sustain life.

^{4.} That the security of the mortgagee would be lessened, if not destroyed, by this plan.

^{5.} That by the emancipation of the slaves, the West Indian colonies would cease to be of any value to Great Britain.

originated, has been embalmed in the universal approbation of all true slave-holders; namely, that the condition of the negro is only to be improved through the medium of the violators of his natural rights, and the contrivers of all his miseries acting in the colonial assemblies. And this position the white colonists of Demerara illustrate, by urging in their memorial that the sufferings of the negro slave on the low lands are of a kind so intolerable to him from constitutional habits and the effects of the climate, that the cultivation cannot be maintained, unless His Majesty will be graciously pleased to consent that the said petitioners, who are themselves infinitely more idle, shall continue to hold his innocent people in a state of slavery, and to scourge them on to work, without wages, at an employment from which, according to their own statement, human nature instinctively recoils. In case this argument should fail to convince a benevolent prince of the justice of their cause and the moderation of their claims, they have taken care to support it, by informing His Majesty that, not being able to discriminate between his people and their own cattle, they have made them over, with other live stock, as pledges for money lent, and that the security of the mortgagee will be lessened, if not destroyed, by the plan which his royal mind had conceived for protecting from their further usurpations 75,000 of their fellow-creatures, who have exactly the same claim upon his paternal regards as themselves. They have even ventured to add, that if justice is rendered to these innocent children of dismay, the West Indian colonies will cease to be of any value to Great Britain; as though the immutable principles of justice, and the fixed duties of an English king, were nothing when opposed to those maxims of pecuniary advantage which go to make up the code of Transatlantic morality. It is impossible to read over this memorial of the white colonists of Demerara without calling to mind the indignant illustration of Mr. Burke, where he supposes a legislature, under the influence of similar principles, "weighing, as it were, in scales hung up in a shop of horrors, so much actual crime against so much contingent profit, and, after putting in and out weights, declaring that the balance was on the side of the profits." "Far," says that enlightened statesman, "far am I from denying in theory the real rights of man. If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an institution of beneficence; and the law itself is only beneficence acting by rule. Men have a right to live by that rule; they have a right to justice, as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in politic function or in

ordinary occupation; they have a right to the fruits of their industry, and to the means of making their industry fruitful; they have a right to the acquisitions of their parents, to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring, to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. Whatever each man can separately do without trespassing on others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, with all its combinations of skill and force, can do in his favour. In this partnership all men have equal rights, though not to equal things." Such were the legislative maxims of that illustrious senator, whose warning voice proclaimed, in accents never to be forgotten, "the House of Commons will be able to preserve its greatness only so long as it can keep the breakers of the law in India from becoming the makers of the law for England."

It is not from the men who put their fellowsubjects to death for refusing to be their slaves, that the people of England will be content to derive their notions of policy or justice. How it has happened that the King's Order has been suspended, and that so many thousands of innocent persons, unconvicted, untried, unaccused, are suffered to remain in the condition of criminals, while arguments, subversive of all liberty and all justice, are addressed to a King of Eng-

land, in opposition to his determination to afford his protection to the sufferers, I do not pretend to explain. But I think I may challenge history to produce an instance in which any British sovereign has been placed in a similar predicament of delicacy, pain, and constitutional difficulty. If the slavery of British subjects within the jurisdiction of the British crown, has grown upon us from inattention on the part of successive administrations, —if the evil principle has gathered strength from the gradual insinuation of slave-holders into both houses of parliament, - if the men who hold their fellow-subjects in slavery have derived from their usurpations the means of obtruding themselves into the legislature of a free people, - if, regardless of the consequences to all just notions of genuine liberty, those who have been accustomed to buy and sell the rights and liberties of their countrymen at public auction, are permitted to become "the makers of the law for England," while a few placemen are ostentatiously shut out from the temple of British freedom, - if all jealousy is misplaced, except it be directed against the influence of the crown, and West Indian journalists are to be allowed to boast with impunity of the power and influence of their patrons, -- if it be true that " England is enslaved by her own slave-colonies," and, that while she is priding herself on the securities of her much-envied constitution, "the foul fiend sits mocking in her gate,"—still it required no ordinary portion of assurance, on the part of the slave-holders, to demand of an English king that he should submit to listen, and expose his people to the disquietude of seeing him listen, while "into the porches of his ear is poured the leprous distilment" of West Indian arguments against the rights and liberties of 800,000 of his subjects.

When the white colonists of Demerara assert before their sovereign their right of property in the persons of their fellow men, it is impossible that either king or people should forget, that this pretended right of property is founded on transactions, which, out of the immediate jurisdiction of the colonies, constitute a capital felony by the common declaration and assent of the King, the Lords, and the Commons. It is impossible that either king or people should forget that the Demerara proprietors, acting as the advanced guard of the other colonists, are attacking, not merely the rights which Mr. Burke enumerates as the creatures of civil society, but those prior, inherent, absolute, and paramount rights, which are interwoven with the very nature of man as a rational and responsible being - rights which form the basis of all jurisprudence and legislation, and the protection of which was the first cause, and must for ever

remain the first object, of civil institutions. When the men, who contend for the privilege of holding their innocent fellow-subjects in slavery, demand permission to vindicate their atrocious principle in the presence of the King, it becomes the people of England to be on their guard against the favourite fallacy of the slaveholders, who, with no inconsiderable dexterity, have contrived to confound those rights which originate in the social compact, and therefore admit of legislative modification, with the absolute rights of human beings, which belong to them as individuals, by the law of their existence, and not as members of society. "Absolute rights," says Blackstone, "are such as would belong to persons in a state of nature, and which every man is entitled to enjoy, whether in society or out of it."

It is upon the law of nature and the law of revelation, that jurists and legislators have laid the foundation of those human laws, which have been properly defined to be "a rule of civil conduct prescribed by the Supreme Power in a state, commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong;" but the artifice of the advocates of slavery has been, at all times, to treat of legislation, as if the introduction of human laws had superseded the laws of nature and of God. To prevent such a fraud on the understandings to mankind, Judge Blackstone has

been careful to state, with great clearness and precision, that "those rights which God and nature have established, and are, therefore, called natural rights, such as are life and liberty, need not the aid of human laws to be more effectually vested in every man than they are; neither do they receive any additional strength when declared by municipal or human laws to be inviolable. On the contrary, no human legislature has power to abridge or destroy them, unless the owner shall himself commit some criminal act that amounts to a forfeiture." the present instance, the negro is the owner. "Human laws," says the same learned and able writer, "define and enforce those rights which belong to man, considered as an individual, as well as those which belong to him, considered as related to others. For the principal aim of society is, to protect individuals in the enjoyment of those absolute rights, which belong to a man considered as an individual, and which were vested in him by the immutable laws of nature, but which could not be preserved in peace without that mutual assistance and intercourse which is gained by association in communities. Hence it follows," he remarks, "that the first and primary end of human laws is to maintain and regulate the absolute rights of individuals. Such rights, as are social and relative, result from, and are posterior to, the

formation of states and societies; so that to maintain and regulate them is clearly a subsequent consideration. Therefore, the principal view of human laws is, or ought always to be, to explain, protect, and enforce such rights as are absolute, which in themselves are few and simple; and then such rights as are relative. The absolute rights of man are denominated the natural liberty of mankind, being a right inherent in us by birth, and one of God's gifts to man at his creation. But every man, when he enters into society, gives up a part of his natural liberty, in consideration of receiving the advantages of mutual intercourse and protection. Political or civil liberty is no other than natural liberty, so far restrained by human laws as is necessary and expedient for the common good."—Bl. vol. i. bk. i.

Here, then, is the rule by which the decision of the King in Council must be regulated: either the negroes have given up a certain unimportant portion of their natural rights, in exchange for that protection which is to secure their liberties; in other words, in exchange for the rights of British subjects, and the advantages of civil association: or they form an independent community;—and on this supposition, also, while they are innocent of such crimes as work a forfeiture, they can only be divested of their natural rights by robbery and violence.

In the former case, the rights they have acquired as British subjects, and as parties to the social compact, must, under the sceptre of a British king, protect them from the calamities of a state of slavery, which negatives the existence of all those rights. In the latter case, it is not to be supposed, that, when the question is fully and expressly placed before him, a king of England would deliberately countenance and abet an act of robbery and violence, committed on the natural rights and persons of 800,000 unoffending human beings. The claim of the colonial negroes upon the King's protection, is of equal force, by whatever denomination they may be presented to his notice - whether as innocent British subjects born within his allegiance, or as helpless strangers, brought by an act of piracy within the precincts of his sovereignty. If it should be objected, that kings of England have connived at these acts of robbery and violence in former Orders of Council, and that they have been indirectly countenanced in ill-considered Acts of Parliament, the answer is, that the laws of nature and of God are uniform, paramount, and universal; and, that kings and parliaments of England do not possess the moral competence to condemn the innocent, or to convert rapine into justice. The answer is, that if, by any oversight, any such acts and orders have received the royal assent, we are

bound to presume that the King, the council, and the parliament, will be guided by those principles of beneficence and justice, which form the standing policy of legitimate government; and that, instead of confirming themselves in error, they will feel that it is amongst the first and immediate duties of all legislators to seek out, without loss of time, correctives for their aberrations from true principles, and to apply them. "The engagement and pact of society, which generally goes by the name of the constitution," forbids the supposition that any of the legislative authorities of England, will deliberately and intentionally persist in violating the great fundamental principles of humanity and justice; "otherwise," to adopt the language of Mr. Burke, "competence and power would soon be confounded, and no law left but the will of a prevailing force." The judges of the land, whose business it is to administer the law as they find it, whatever they may think of an erroneous statute, must conform to its enactments; but those men, whether in the council or in the parliament, who are called to exercise authority in the state, as the makers of law for the colonies or for England, have the power to revise and remedy; and it is their duty to take care that they do not legislate in opposition to the positive obligations of common honesty. If it were allowable for an enlightened

and Christian people to reject the unerring rule of doing to others as we would have them do to us, and to seek a precedent, and an heartless excuse for slavery, in the custom of villenage, and the usages of barbarous and semi-barbarous ages—it would probably be found, that the victorious Danes, and the other settlers in this country, held their villeins as vanguished enemies, whose lives, and, consequently, whose liberties, were forfeited by the ancient and ferocious laws of war. But the iniquity of that practice was proclaimed by England at the cannon's mouth, when she laid the port of Algiers in ruins; and, moreover, the fact of hostile conflict is wanting in the case of the negroes, to bring them within the rule of those exploded laws. Even the Romans, in the blindness of their pagan morality, were anxious to gloss over their schemes of rapine, by something like the show of retributive justice: if they sent our British ancestors to work as slaves in the mines of Cornwall, it was because they had stood in arms against their power, and had put in peril the lives of Roman soldiers. The poor negroes have only wept: they challenged to no combat; they had nothing to oppose to the strength of the violators of their liberties but the sighings of a broken heart, and the low murmurs of despair lapsing into idiotcy.

The specious argument urged by Mr. Canning, in 1823, that "in the colonies the British con-

stitution is not in full play," I cannot admit to be true, as far as the right of personal protection is concerned;* and we find accordingly that the white colonists are in full possession of that right, as well as of all the ordinary privileges of Englishmen. But if the fact were otherwise, the argument would have no application to the case of the wretched negroes; because the rights of which they are despoiled are independent of all human forms of government, and do not derive their existence from the British constitution, but from the laws of nature and of God. In the course of his speech, that accomplished debater, having ingeniously assumed that in the West Indies the British constitution is not in full play, and taken care to overlook the natural rights of men in the discussion, certainly entitled himself to the merit of having smoothed out a convenient path for the remainder of his argument. He goes on to say, therefore, "I think the house will be of my opinion, that at this time of the day we must consider property as the creature of law; † and that when the law has sanctioned any particular species of property, we cannot legislate in this house as if we were legislating for a new world, the surface

^{*} See Blackstone, vol. i. p. 107.

[†] The word "legal" has been prefixed to "chattels" in this pamphlet to meet the popular notion. But as property is the creature of law, there can be no such thing as unlawful property. If the negroes are not legal chattels, they are not chattels at all.

of which is totally clear from the obstructions of antecedent claims and obligations." It is singular that a mind so luminous should not have perceived that those antecedent claims could be no other than the natural and absolute rights of the negroes; that those antecedent obligations were necessarily the obligations which bind all legislators to found their proceedings on the laws of nature and of God; and that the particular species of property he spoke of was somewhat at variance with the undoubted interest which every human being possesses in his own body, to which, if such a property could be treated as the creature of municipal law, the law would declare the negro to possess a claim "prior in time, paramount in title, superior in equity." In this, as in every other instance where it is attempted to maintain the usurpation of the slave-holders, the basis of the fallacy consists in keeping natural rights out of sight, and in disregarding the fact, that the condition of slavery cannot have a legal existence without previous forfeiture. When a felon is sentenced to the galleys, he becomes, in a mitigated sense, a slave — the negroes are merely outraged human beings.

Whether the prayer of the Demerara white colonists, in their memorial, be or be not that His Majesty would give his countenance to a daily and hourly infringement of the funda-

mental principles of the British constitution, in the persons of his enslaved subjects, it must, at all events, assume, in substance and effect, the character of a prayer, entreating the king of a free and christian people, to unite with the wrong-doers in violating those paramount and immutable laws of nature and revelation, to which the British constitution, like every other system of sound and virtuous legislation, is indebted for all its excellencies. The battle for the absolute and inherent rights of the enslaved negroes, and men of colour, must first be fought out, their right to their own persons must be established, before we can enter on the consideration of the exact quantum of civil privileges to which they may be entitled as English colonists, under that consitution which gives their king his crown, and binds them to his allegiance. The slave-holders and their advocates, by confounding two questions so essentially distinct and separate, have endeavoured to perplex a very plain subject. Let it suffice, for the present, that it is against the personal and absolute rights of innocent human beings, that the colonists are about to contend before the sovereign and his council. At any other time, a memorial, avowing such an object, would scarcely have required notice, except as an instance of monstrous and almost incredible impudence and absurdity; but that document has derived no

ordinary importance from its coincidence with the opinions of certain very able and conspicuous individuals, who have yet to learn, that justice to the rich does not consist in making slaves of the poor; and that if sugar cannot be raised without crime in the West Indies, its cultivation under free labourers in the East ought not to be discouraged by prohibitory duties, that secure a monopoly to the slave-holders in and out of parliament.

While they can hope to uphold the sugar monopoly, the West Indians may easily afford to subscribe and scatter hundreds of thousands of pounds throughout England, to gain influence at a general election; but Englishmen will do well to bear in mind, that there is no condition of human life so degraded, no class of men so abandoned, as not to offer the chance of furnishing better representatives, than those hollow pretenders, who, while they talk on the hustings, and at public meetings, about liberty and humanity, can reconcile their consciences to the practice of robbing their fellow-subjects of their freedom, — the greatest of all robberies, as it includes them all -- of every privilege which is dear to a human being -- of all that constitutes property, or renders property desirable—merely that, as gentlemen sugar-farmers, they may themselves live in a style of splendour and expense far beyond the rate of English landowners

of much larger estates and better pretensions. It is difficult to say, whether the man, who really believes all these enormities to be right as long as they increase his gains, or he that willingly profits by them, knowing that they are wrong, is the more unfit to be intrusted, as a member of parliament, with the liberties and interests of the people of England. If we must have slave-holders in the House of Commons, let them be imported from Algiers; for those barbarians only hold in slavery their enemies taken in war, and not their innocent fellowsubjects. Algerine morality might permit the barbarian to make professions of zeal for his constituents, while he fleeced them through the medium of an oppressive monopoly; but he certainly would not insult their common sense by affecting to be a first-rate guardian of the principles of the British constitution.

When the unconstitutional and unchristian doctrines of West Indian jurisprudence are about to be advanced before the King and council in solemn argument, the total disregard of the first principles of all just legislation, by which the colonists must support their pretensions, will, I trust, have the effect of calling back the attention of the people of England to those great fundamental maxims of law and justice, which, in this country, must never be allowed by any legislators in council or in par-

liament, to give place to the dark and bloodstained doctrines of the buyers and sellers of their fellow-creatures. The slave-holders of Demerara and of the other colonies are at issue with the King on questions wholly relating to the personal and absolute rights of the negroes as human beings, which the King and council, even if so disposed, cannot legally take away, and are bound by the most sacred obligations to protect: all that the King and council have power to do is to prohibit others from violating those rights, and to issue orders tending to correct the existing abuses in such a manner as may be most for the advantage of the sufferers. It was not even within the discretion of the King and council to order the negro to pay money for the purchase of his own body, with any view to indemnify a claimant who had bought that body, knowing that it had been forcibly wrested from the right owner, or who himself had watched the moment of its ill-fated birth to clutch and hold it with an unrelenting grasp, as his rightful acquisition, by the law of the strongest. The only principle on which the order can be justified, is the advantage arising to the negro himself, from extending the royal protection to him in such a form as, by giving him previous habits of voluntary labour and self-denial, would secure his future prosperity, and prevent his being injured by an

intended benefit. If by any accident the King, or the parliament, have been the means of misleading the white colonists, by making laws, which appear to recognize their right to hold their fellow-subjects in slavery, those colonists must seek for compensation at the hands of the parties by whom they have been misled: but that is a consideration which does not, in the remotest degree, affect the absolute rights of the much-wronged negroes. Mr. Burke, among the heaviest of his charges against the revolutionary law-givers of France, in addressing his Gallic correspondent on the wickedness of their proceedings towards a certain class of individuals, finishes the climax of their injustice, by exclaiming, "You order him to buy the right which nature had given to him gratuitously at his birth, and of which no authority on earth could lawfully deprive him."

On what ground, then, are the Demerara white colonists to be heard against the order for compulsory manumission? On what ground has the operation of that order been suspended for a single moment? On what principle of law, humanity, or justice, is it, that the slaveholders are not at once compelled, throughout the colonies of England, to adopt all the regulations of the Order in Council? The negroes, indeed, might shew cause why they should not be expected to purchase with money, slowly

and painfully acquired by extra labour borrowed from their repose, those personal and absolute rights which have been stolen from them; but if they do not raise the objection, no other persons have the shadow of a pretence for interposing between the King's protecting hand and the trembling outlaws of tyranny and avarice. If the white colonists have been misled, the question of compensation will not the less be a distinct and separate question in the minds of all those who do not desire to become the accomplices of a system of iniquity, which, within the territories of the British crown, robs innocent British subjects of their absolute, inalienable, and unquestionable rights; which denies to them their very nature, which classes them with beasts of burthen, and then consigns them to the gibbet and the stake if they cry out against the accumulated injustice that overwhelms and crushes them to the earth. With the hapless negroes—to remonstrate, is to die.

I have not multiplied references to enforce my observations, because I deem the authority of Burke and Blackstone more than sufficient on a question so capable of supporting itself. I have no fears for the result of the hearing on the Demerara memorial, before the King in council; * but I recollect with bitter anguish, that

^{*} This was written, and published in another form before the hearing; at which time the writer very little supposed that any

while the sprightly war of words amuses the bystanders in the council-chamber, and adds fresh lustre to the brilliant reputations of the eloquent combatants, the insatiable demon of colonial rapacity, "smeared with the blood of human sacrifice," will revel with unchecked privilege among the children of desolation,

of the counsel in support of the manumission clause would be so instructed as to permit of their introducing such expressions as the following—"I do not deny that by law the planter is entitled to the labour of the slave"-" The planter is in possession of property"-" We all agree that the slave is not to be taken from the master without the situation of the latter being considered, and without compensation being afforded him," &c. Of course the pretended owner had only to reply that neither the market price nor any other mode suggested would compensate him. There is no doubt that the learned counsel conformed to his instructions, whoever may have given them, and thus the King's ministers were kindly relieved from their awkward position in having advised their royal master to countenance and entertain a discussion of so delicate a nature. The writer of this pamphlet, at all times an enemy to interminable conflicts and half-measures, had long anxiously wished for an opportunity of raising the question of negro bondage before the King, sitting not in his judicial, but in his legislative capacity in council, and of calling on the sovereign to assert or to deny the lawfulness of the practice of consigning his own subjects to slavery within his own dominions. He wished in justice to all parties that the point should be fully and fairly discussed, and rejoicing in the unexpected occasion, he went to Town, and attended a private conference on the subject, when he pointed out the course above suggested; but his opinion was instantly opposed with great zeal, and he was not again consulted. He was soon after given to understand that it was thought expedient that the Society should not interfere at all, a determination which he could not but approve when he saw that what he deemed the proper line of proceeding was not likely to be adopted.

making life hideous, and shutting out all hope, but such as may be found in the awful certainty of an early grave. Something, too, I feel for my sovereign. I did not expect to have lived to see the day when any class of British subjects would have dared to claim the privilege of contending before a British king, that they have a right to consider another class of his subjects as their proper prey. I did not expect to have lived to see the day, when the right of destroying, for the sake of gain, the happiness, the liberties, and the lives of innocent human beings, would have been admitted as an arguable question in England, and in the presence of a king of England. The Algerines, by their laws and customs, consigned to slavery the enemies of their country and of their religion, captured in the course of hostilities; and England, the champion of humanity, discovered in the savage practice a just ground of war. I am ignorant of the language of the Turk; but whatever may be the power of its vocabulary, it can hardly be adequate to express the astonishment, the scorn, and immeasurable contempt of the barbarian, for what he will consider (I will not say how justly) the base hypocrisy of the British nation, in affecting to commiserate the condition of his captured enemies, when he learns, from the recent declaration of an English judge, that 800,000 unresisting, helpless individuals, are held in slavery within the dominions of the British crown, by the connivance of the government and legislature of this country. When the impious bondage of dark-coloured Englishmen, born within the King's allegiance, and of helpless foreigners, is thus elaborately proclaimed in the Court of Admiralty, to be part and parcel of our daily usage, you will ask, perhaps, in what light the attack upon Algiers ought to be viewed, and on what principle that effusion of blood is to be justified? Let the unavenged spirits of thousands of our fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects, who have sunk beneath the miseries of West Indian slavery, since the bombardment of Algiers took place, answer that question: I cannot, - neither can Lord Stowell.

The pen drops from my hand with a mingled sentiment of surprise, sorrow, and indignation. I can only implore you to redouble your exertions, and to excite among all those with whom you are connected, a spirit of perseverance adequate to a crisis of so much novelty, and presenting itself in such a questionable shape. I can only recommend you to enter your solemn protest against any supposed acquiescence on your part in the doctrines of West Indian equity, by expressing your sentiments through the medium of respectful petitions to both Houses of Parliament, and praying the British legis-

lature to interpose and stand between the living and the dead, and stay the plague.

In doing this, let me intreat you not to injure the cause you desire to serve, by admitting the proprietary rights of the pretended owners, or by dwelling on mere details of cruelty. Do not mistake that which is incidental for the chief point in the case, or give an undue importance to a few more or less lashes of the whip, when life and liberty and religion are at stake. Parliament may, with some appearance of reason, evince an unwillingness to legislate for the colonies on matters of municipal regulation, which properly belong to the assemblies; but if if the public voice is effectually raised, parliament cannot withhold its interference when protection is demanded for eight hundred thousand innocent British subjects forcibly held in slavery. This is an affair which concerns not the colonies merely, but the empire. I have before remarked that the law of custom can have no application where the natural rights of human beings are in question; and if at your public meeting any person should stand up and assert that the negroes are slaves by positive law, let me recommend you to call upon him to produce the law or the statute, and to establish his assertion in the instance of any one negro in existence. As every human being is born with natural rights, slavery is the excep-

tion and must be proved; -First, By showing that those who are said to have made the law for destroying the natural rights of innocent men, possessed the moral competence to do so; -Secondly, By showing that possessing that competence, they have actually exercised it, by making such a law; — and, Thirdly, By proving the fact of its reference, if made, to the particular individual alleged to be a slave, who, as in the case of a convict, must be named and marked out by specific designation. If these three requisities cannot be established against the colonial negroes as individuals, it is clear that they cannot be established against them collectively; it is clear that the exception is not made good in any single instance, and that the general rule must take effect. The pretended proprietary right then falls to the ground; and the quibbling assertion, that a human being is a slave and a chattel merely because he is wrongfully and forcibly treated as such, stands exposed in its native absurdity. According to these reasoners, if it were possible to shut up a sane man in a mad-house, he would be a lunatic. Our dark coloured fellow-subjects in the colonies are not and cannot be legal chattels: they answer precisely to the description which occurs in the act of parliament for the abolition of the slave-trade - " persons intended to be sold, transferred, used or dealt with

as slaves." They are innocent British subjects treated as slaves, and nothing more, although my Lord Stowell is pleased to speak of the restitution of their rights as "the act of charity," and of compensation to the wrong-doer as "the act of justice."

The manner in which the King's Order in Council, throughout the West Indian colonies, has been evaded, rejected, or opposed, in all its more important provisions, corroborates, by the most conclusive evidence, all that the past experience of thirty years had taught us, of the utter hopelessness of expecting from the colonial legislatures any real amelioration of the condition of the negroes. I have endeavoured to show you from authorities easily to be met with, and of the highest character, that neither the King nor the parliament possess the legal capacity to annihilate the absolute rights of innocent men; but on the other hand, let me remind you that the King and parliament are endowed with ample powers to protect the innocent from oppression, and I cannot permit myself to doubt that the petitions of the people will call those powers and that protection into activity, now that the case of contumacy, supposed by Mr. Canning, has arisen in its most daring aspect.

By asserting the natural rights of the negroes, and destroying the false notion that one

innocent British subject can be legally compelled to become the chattel of another British subject, you will clear the way for the amelioration of the condition of the existing negroes, whom, for their own sake, it might not be prudent too suddenly to set free, and you will remove at once the great obstacle to the liberties of the future children, on whose account the surrender to the parents of an adequate portion of their own time, for the purpose of enabling them to support their own offspring, may then be demanded without interfering with conflicting claims. Then, too, a day in the week in lieu of Sunday may be asked for the parent's spiritual welfare, without clashing with vested interests

In adverting to the emancipation of the future children, which, if the late Lord Melville's proposition had not been opposed, would have taken place twenty-seven years ago, it is not without reluctance that I descend to advocate the immutable principles of truth and justice on the low ground of expediency, but I must here remind those who can conceive no higher motives of public policy, that every argument connected with public safety that has been at any time urged in favor of the emancipation of the Irish Catholics, establishes the necessity of not augmenting, by enslaving the future children, the already overwhelming majority of

outraged Englishmen in the West Indies. The votaries of expediency ought not to forget that the hundreds of thousands of innocent British subjects now held in bondage in those colonies are only kept down by the presence and appalling annual sacrifice of our troops, at an enormous expence to the mother country; -that they have constantly before their eyes the example of Hayti, whose sable warriors naturally sympathise with wrongs so recently experienced by themselves; -and that the United States of America must be expected, on the first quarrel, to repay with interest the measure adopted by England in the late war of landing troops upon their territories, and of proclaiming the freedom of those American slaves who would join our forces. As British born subjects, the children of our black colonists, or of our colonial peasantry, as they are sometimes called, immediately upon their birth, are under the King's protection, and policy speaks as loudly on their behalf as humanity and justice; but as long as men who hold their fellow-subjects in slavery are allowed to crowd the benches of parliament as adequate guardians of British freedom, we cannot expect that any administration, however well disposed, will volunteer a conflict with an interest at once so united and so powerful. Deputations and interviews with ministers of state may be not unpleasing in themselves, but it is an intercourse of civility not likely to accelerate our movements, or to give vigour to our language, and can effect little for the oppressed negroes, until the government finds itself urged forward irresistibly by the public voice, and the walls of parliament, night after night, shall echo to the cry, that "INNOCENT BRITISH CHILDREN ARE CONDEMNED TO SLAVERY WITHIN THE DOMINIONS OF THE BRITISH CROWN."

Having explained to you the basis which I conceive you ought to take in your petitions, I have only to add a few observations respecting the mode of conducting your proceedings. You must at all times bear in mind, that the anti-slavery party consists of almost all those members of the established church who do not think that they evince too much gratitude towards their Creator and Preserver by attending divine worship twice on the Sabbath day; it consists of all the Dissenters, I believe I may say, to a man; and it consists of all that class of acute and active men, known by the name of Liberals. These three descriptions taken together, amount, probably, to a million of persons belonging to that intelligent and disinterested portion of the community, with whom resides PUBLIC OPINION. On the other hand, there are the slave-holders, who, in both Houses of Parliament, and especially in the Commons,

are very numerous and, where their personal interests are concerned, very united. Thus the governmenment is placed between two fires. A more formidable instrument for annoying the minister of the day could not well be imagined, and consequently, all your movements will be viewed with jealousy, and ought to be placed above suspicion. Take care that party politicians, or those who are looking up to them for patronage, do not get in among you and acquire an influence which may enable them to press forward your meetings and petitions when their friends are out of power, and to keep you back when they are in. Let no whipper-in throw you off like a pack of hounds, or head you at his pleasure - an accident, which you will excuse me for adding, is quite as likely to happen in a borough town as any where else, not excepting that in which you reside when at home. Let me recommend to your imitation the example of the Surrey Anti-Slavery Society, which has not only placed the prayer of its petitions on a principle that must ultimately work its way, but proceeds to hold its meetings year after year at a fixed time, without postponement or omission, whether whigs or tories sit on the ministerial benches, and by so doing, defies the imputation of party influence. Advocates, either from conviction or ambition, will at all times be ready to take up a subject in

parliament at once so popular, and so easy to elucidate and enforce; but it is extremely desirable that the representatives of every borough and county in the united kingdom should be seen to take a part in this great constitutional question, and therefore you will do well to give a hint to the members for your own town, that on an occasion of such importance to the interests of liberty, justice, and religion, "England expects every man to do his duty."

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November 14, 1827.

P.S.—If those persons into whose hands this small pamphlet may fall should think it likely to be of use, it is anxiously requested that they will make a point of circulating it among their friends, as only a limited number have been printed. By that means it may be doing its work, until other and more able writers shall be induced to give greater prominence to those fundamental principles by which alone the question of negro slavery can be sincerely and honestly tried. The following passages extracted from the Surrey Anti-Slavery petition for 1828, entirely accord with the opinions contained in this pamphlet.

" 3. That although the government is

pledged to carry into effect the resolutions passed by your honourable house in the year 1823, five years have elapsed, during which they have remained little more than a dead letter.

- "4. That your petitioners never supposed that any real benefit to our fellow-subjects held in slavery could result from the above-named resolutions, inasmuch as the unoffending negroes, who have been stolen, and who, with their descendants, are unjustly held in bondage, are considered in those resolutions in the light of lawful property; whereas your petitioners can never depart from the great fundamental principle, that no legislative authority on earth can possess the competence to abrogate the natural rights of innocent men; and furthermore, because under the plausible pretext of an equitable consideration of the interests of all parties, the usurping claims of the oppressor, and the unquestionable rights of the oppressed, are placed upon the same footing in the said resolutions, as if it were possible to reconcile the interests of the plunderer and the party plundered.
- "5. That your petitioners decline to urge upon the consideration of your honourable house those instances of cruelty which have been exposed in the official documents laid before it, because your petitioners do not admit that

even gentle treatment could justify the monstrous usurpation of depriving innocent British subjects of their natural rights, and of converting them into mere speaking cattle.

Extract from the Speech of H. Drummond, Esq. at the above meeting.

—"After all the exertions that had been made they were in fact no further than Mr. Wilberforce had been when he first began his labours in 1783. Not two years ago (1827) many had been persuaded to let the question rest for a year, because, forsooth, a liberal administration had just come into power!!"

As the writer did not take any active part in anti-slavery affairs till the autumn of 1827, he is ignorant of the arguments made use of in favour of this sudden inactivity; but he is aware that the circumstance coupled with the renewal of the suspended meetings in various parts of the country, however accidental, when the Whigs began to totter, and afterwards, before the Duke of Wellington had time to look round him in his new situation, has had the effect of creating great dissatisfaction in the minds of many sincere friends to the cause, and of exposing it to the sneers of the slave-holders.

APPENDIX.

AT a public meeting of the members and supporters of the Surrey Anti-Slavery Society, held on Thursday, the 25th day of October, 1827, at the Spread Eagle Inn, at Epsom, to take into consideration a petition to both houses of parliament against slavery in the British colonies,

HENRY DRUMMOND, Esq. in the chair,

The following resolutions were unanimously agreed to:

Resolved, 1. That in pursuance of the resolutions adopted by the House of Commons in May, 1823, his Majesty's government introduced into Trinidad, by an order in council, a law, by which it was provided, that in case any slave shall be desirous to purchase the freedom of himself, or of herself, or of his or her wife, or husband, or child, or brother, or sister, it shall and may be lawful for any such slave so to purchase the freedom of himself, or of any other such person as aforesaid;" and that his Majesty's government, having imposed the above law on the colony of Trinidad, required that it should be adopted by the colonies of Demerara and Berbice, as well as by all the other slave colonies in England.

2. That, recollecting that the unhappy individuals so designated as slaves are either British subjects or aliens, whose

rights are as inextinguishable, as positive, and as paramount as those of the same descriptions of persons residing in England, whatever may be their rank in life, this meeting cannot but express their deep regret, that in orders of council or acts of parliament the word slaves should ever have been introduced, as a correct description of innocent Englishmen or unoffending foreigners within the sovereignty of England; for, although any man under duress may be forcibly subjected to all the miseries of slavery, no guiltless stranger or British subject can be constitutionally made a slave or chattle in England, or in England's colonies. And this meeting, anxious for the preservation of the great principles of the civil compact, as well as of the honour of their country, think it incumbent upon them humbly and respectfully, but with the firmness of Britons, to enter their solemn protest against every such use of the term in public acts, unguarded by a declaration of the entire illegality of slavery.

- 3. That the rights of unoffending foreigners are consecrated by the law of nations, and the law of God, and that Britishborn subjects owe their rights and privileges as Englishmen to the place of their birth, and not to the colour of their skins. That white men, born in the British West India Colonies, possess only the same foundation for their claim to the character and immunities of Englishmen as the negroes and men of colour born in the same colonies. That personal freedom is the inheritance and birth-right of every British subject. That neither the king nor the parliament, and still less can the colonial assemblies, in their petty municipal jurisdictions, legally or constitutionally, at their mere will and pleasure, deprive innocent human beings of their personal rights, and reduce them to a state of slavery, and that no custom or usage can be pleaded in support of an act of robbery and violence, opposed to the fundamental laws and constitution of the country, to the law of nations, and to the law of God.
- 4. That this meeting have heard with more of indignation than surprise, that the court of policy of Demerara, as well as

the local authorities of the other colonies, refuse to comply with, or evade or render abortive, the wishes of his Majesty's government for permitting negroes and men of colour to purchase for themselves or their dearest relatives an exemption from the miseries of unrequited toil under a burning sun, without hope and without end; from the sufferings of a lingering but premature decay, proved by the excess of deaths among them compared with those who are in possession of their freedom; from the privation of all that renders life desirable to an intelligent being; and from the certainty of being put to death, as though they were rebels, if they should question the right of their fellow-subjects to buy and sell them like cattle, and to inflict an accumulation of wretchedness upon them by the law of the strongest, of which the tyranny of the Turks in Greece was but a shadow.

5. That such a state of things is nothing less in its principle and in its consequences than a civil war raging under the immediate eve of government, between one class of Englishmen and another class. That while England is sending out her fleets to put an end to a struggle for superiority in Greece, and to a sacrifice of lives, in no respect more loudly demanding her immediate interference, the cruelties of slavery are doing the work of the sword within the territories of the British crown. That while the free blacks of the Haytian republic have doubled their numbers in twenty years, and are rising fast into notice as an industrious and civilized nation while the enfranchised negroes and free men of colour rapidly increase and prosper in the West Indian colonies, the case is widely different with the same description of individuals held in a state of slavery. That the appalling waste of human life among those whom they boldly call their slaves was long a favourite argument of the colonists in support of the inhuman slave trade. That it appears, from official documents laid on the table of the House of Commons, that, in Trinidad, the excess of deaths over the births among the enslaved population is fast working out their total annihilation. That in Demerara

it appears, from evidence equally authentic, that the excess of the deaths over the births among the same unhappy class, from 1818 to 1824, amounted to 8,754, upon a population of 75,000 enslaved persons, being a rate of destruction in that colony of the lives of the weaker party of his Majesty's subjects by the stronger, that in fifty-three years would unpeople the earth.

- 6. That this meeting never supposed that men who contend for the right of reducing the helpless and unprotected to a state of slavery, and of hanging them for not submitting quietly to the injustice would willingly consent to adopt any measures for improving the condition of their victims. That the reluctance of the Demerara planters and of the other colonists in the present instance, is only another proof, if any were wanting, of the gross delusion practised on the British public by those who maintain that the business of legislating for the protection of the negroes should be left in the hands of the planters and their agents in the colonial assemblies, whose gains are in proportion to their usurpations; and of whom some, when it was proposed by his Majesty's government that Sunday should be wholly given up to the enslaved negroes as a day of rest and relaxation, actually preferred a claim for compensation; while others refused to make any alteration - a refusal which, in all its circumstances, but too closely resembles that which in ancient times brought down the great judgments of the Lord upon Pharoh, when, in the hardness of his heart, he said to the task-masters of the people, "The tale of bricks which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish ought thereof, for they be idle, therefore they cry, let us go and sacrifice to our God."
- 7. That this meeting altogether doubt the propriety of allowing the wolf to make laws for the protection of the lamb, and cannot exclude from their recollection, that the colonists, far from respecting the rights of strangers to them in blood, have even consigned to the same state of unlawful bdndage their own mulatto children, born of enslaved English and

Foreign women, evincing thereby a want of sympathy and natural feeling unknown to the untaught savage, and only to be found in the very men in whose equity and moderation, as practical legislators, the people of England are urged to place confidence.

- 8. That the colonial legislators have repeatedly and plainly shewn, that they will only make such alterations in favour of the negroes as are consistent with what they are pleased to consider a due regard to their own right of property in their persons, meaning, evidently, only such alterations as are consistent with that usurpation of the rights of others, which every improvement in the condition and mental capacity of the negro necessarily tends to render less profitable and more difficult to be enforced.
- 9. That in excuse for refusing to allow these children of dismay to purchase their exemption from such complicated evils with money earned during extra hours of labour, borrowed from their repose, it appears that the white colonists have thought it not unworthy of themselves and of their cause to assert, that men capable of such spontaneous industry, under every disadvantage, would cease to labour if they were allowed their freedom-an assertion, to which may be opposed the existing prosperity of the black republic of Hayti; the recent and uncontradicted statements in parliament of the good conduct of the enfranchised population in Jamaica; the distinct admission of the fact by one of the most prominent advocates of the interests of the colonial proprietors, speaking in his place in the House of Commons; the resolution of the Grenada assembly, in 1823, declaring that the free coloured inhabitants of that island, are a respectable, well-behaved class of the community, and possessed of considerable property in the colony; and the official documents transmitted to this country, from which it appears that of 9,000 negroes and persons of colour who are in possession of their liberty in the British West Indian colonies, only 227 received even temporary relief as paupers during the years 1821 to 1825; while, of about

65,000 whites, in the same period, 1675 received relief, the proportion of enfranchised blacks receiving relief being about one in 400, and of whites about one in 40; and that the charge of profligacy and idleness is advanced with a singularly ill grace, in opposition to a measure which pre-supposes the unfortunate negroes to have wrought out their exemption from endless persecution by their activity, diligence, and self-denial.

- 10. That palpable and deliberate mirepresentations of the character and disposition of the hundreds of thousands of black Englishmen and foreigners, whom the colonial assemblies have converted into cattle and beasts of burthen, on account of the darkness of their skins, are only part of the same dishonest policy which has induced the colonial legislature to deny, even to the emancipated negroes and men of colour, those ordinary privileges and that common measure of respect which are essential to the comfort and happiness of all men; to set a mark on them as a stigmatized and worthless race; and, by divesting them as far as possible of every motive and opportunity for making a good use of their freedom, to bring that freedom into discredit. That only within these few months a minister of the established church at Barbadoes has been censured in the most severe terms by the vestry of his parish, as a promoter of insubordination and sedition, for permitting their fellow-subjects and fellow-sinners—the negroes and people of colour—to kneel before their Creator at the same time with white communicants, though placed below them at the sacramental table, and humbly receiving the consecrated elements after them.
- 11. That liberal as were the terms on which his Majesty's government proposed that the negroes and people of colour should be permitted to purchase their own live bodies from those who had bought them, knowing they were stolen, the intimation from the government at home has been met by a refusal on the part of the colonists, in which this meeting cannot but recognise the natural fears of men conscious of their own monstrous tyranny and usurpation, and terrified at the thought of placing individuals whom they have so grievously

injured on a level with themselves, and in a condition to call them to account.

12. That in the nature of things men cannot easily be brought really to improve the condition of those whom they think it their interest to brutalise and keep in intellectual darknees, that they may with more facility be made to labour without recompence, for the profit of the authors of their That the colonial assemblies have gone much too calamities. far in making laws for hanging and burning dark-coloured Englishmen, for the sole offence of asserting their natural and unquestionable rights, or of even hearing others talk of doing so without giving information, to permit a hope that those assemblies will ever enact, or willingly execute any provisions in favour of the objects of their despotism; and that, in the apprehension of this meeting, the white colonists of Demerara, in refusing to allow the negroes and people of colour to purchase their exemption from oppression, and in declaring, in their Memorial to His Majesty in Council, that their right of property in his subjects rests on the very same foundation with every other description of property known to the law, afford proof as pregnant of the utter delusion of allowing the oppressors to legislate for the oppressed, as the refusal of the assembly at Jamaica, and of the other colonial legislatures in the last session, to exempt females from the savage infliction of the cart-whip on their bared bodies, or from the indecent exposure of their persons to men during the process of whipping, - the place on which that punishment is inflicted on women being the most fleshy part of their thighs. That these are the tender mercies of those practical men, as they are exultingly termed, whom the participators in their polluted profits in this country wish to uphold, as the only proper persons to be entrusted with the duty of improving the condition of the West India negroes and people of colour.

13. That this meeting cannot bring themselves to believe that the members of the court of policy in Demerara, or of any of the other colonial legislatures, are so profoundly igno-

rant as really to imagine that any British subject can, except by the law of superior strength, hold his innocent fellowsubject as a chattle and slave on British ground, and under a British king, or that they are conscientiously persuaded that this pretended claim " rests on the same foundation with every other description of property known to the law." That this meeting does not hesitate to assert, that a negro or man of colour held in slavery is a stolen human being, and that the pretended proprietor is no other than an unpunished receiver, who buys what he knows the vendor had forcibly wrested from the right owner. That, as far as property founded on law is to be considered, the negro is his own property; that he has an inalienable and incontestible right of property in his own person - in his own freedom - in his right to the fruits of his own industry - in his rights as an innocent British subject by the law and constitution of his country, or as an unoffending foreigner by the law of nations - in his rights as a father, as a husband, as a son, - and, above all, in his rights as a rational and responsible being. That these rights, at least, are the inherent property of the poorest negro in the king's dominions, and that it is in opposition to rights so sacred and so paramount, that his oppressor dares to found a claim upon the merit of having either stolen, or purchased from the stealer, the labour and the strength, the rights and the liberties, the person and the hapless posterity of a desolated plundered fellow-creature. That a claim so entirely at variance with every just principle can never be made good, until an answer has been given to the plain question of Mr. Fox -" Why that wrong should be tolerated in the West Indies for which a man would be hanged in England?"

14. That the right of property asserted by the planters in Demerara in kidnapped aliens, and in their own countrymen, is a fearful specimen of the pervading principle in all the colonial legislatures — a principle, which, if it should ever be tolerated by any ministers, or by any legislative authorities in England, would shake the British constitution to its founda-

tion, and proclaim to the astonished world that its watchful guardians never slept except when rich men trampled under foot the stranger, and him that is ready to perish.

SURREY PETITION, 1826.

"That the population of our West Indian colonies consists chiefly of negroes, who are either unoffending foreigners, carried thither by force, or British subjects, born within the king's allegiance.—That these unoffending foreigners possess rights under the law of nations which England is bound to recognize and uphold, as a civilized state, and for the violation of which, in the persons of other foreigners, a British fleet was sent only a few years since to lay the port of Algiers in ruins.— That England on that occasion justly resented the barbarous practice adopted by the Algerines, of converting their enemies taken in war into slaves, as an uncivilized modification of the right assumed by savages of putting their prisoners to death .-That British subjects, born withing the king's allegiance, and innocent of all crime, cannot be deprived of their civil existence, and reduced to a state of slavery by any power known to the constitution of this country. — That such a power necessarily supposes the annihilation of every principle on which the recriprocal claims of allegiance and protection are founded, and at once destroys the basis of the social compact.— That such a power, if it could exist, might reduce to slavery all the born subjects of the king, as justly as any particular portion of them. - That while in Russia civil death has been awarded as an appropriate punishment for high treason, and in Algiers slavery is substituted for the savage right of taking the life of a captured enemy, in the West Indian dominions of the British crown unoffending aliens and offending British subjects are deprived of their civil existence by thousands, and hundreds of thousands, solely for the emolument of private individuals,

who, for that purpose alone, by a monstrous and illegal usurpation, condemn their fellow-subjects to a state of irremediable slavery, and extend the dreadful curse to their children, and their children's children. - That the claim set up by the West Indian slave-masters to their fellow-subjects, and to helpless strangers, as their property, rests on no better basis than the claim of robbers and receivers of goods which they have stolen, or purchased knowing them to be stolen. - That the crime of depriving an innocent man, whether a foreigner or a British subject, of his civil existence, immeasurably exceeds any one of those descriptions of theft for which the punishment of death is usually awarded in this country, as it includes them all. - That it is one continued system of daily and hourly robbery, wresting from the miserable victim his natural liberty, his rights as a man, as a husband, as a father, -his rights as a British subject by the constitution of his country, or as an innocent foreigner by the law of nations. - That the crime is nothing less than that of robbing a human being of all his mental and moral energies, of keeping his mind in darkness lest he should become acquainted with his rights, and of reducing him for all civil purposes to the condition of a murdered man. - That the West Indian negro, though born to all the privileges of a British subject, is allowed no inheritance but slavery. - That if he attemps to assert his just claims he is consigned to the gallows or the stake as a traitor, on the principle by which pirates put to death those who do not quietly submit to their injustice, and thus natural death is added to civil death, and judicial murder to robbery in its most complicated form; to robbery momentarily repeated through a life of terror, of scourgings, and of mental and bodily degradation. - That your petitioners beg leave to observe that these are no fancied horrors, but positive and admitted facts. and that they are here speaking of the sufferings of innocent aliens, whose privileges are consecrated by that law of nations which England has shed her bravest blood to maintain, and of British subjects born in the king's allegiance, whose rights

have the same foundation and are as inalienable as those of every member of your honourable house. - That your petitioners, regarding the slavery of their fellow-subjects in the West Indies as an outrage upon all justice, and sensible of the duty of putting an end, with as little delay as possible, to a system which is pregnant with such complicated evils, confide in the wisdom of your honourable house for the adoption of such measures as may be necessary for the speedy attainment of that desirable object; but at the same time they beg leave respectfully to submit, that there is one measure which, while it is unquestionably safe, would also prove a most efficacious corrective of many of the immediate evils of colonial slavery, and might be carried into effect without loss of time; your petitioners allude to the abrogation of the bounties and protecting duties on sugar. - That these bounties and protecting duties prevent sugar, now become one of the necessaries of life, from being imported from various parts of the world, at a price so much below the sugar from the West Indies as to make a difference to the British public of one penny per pound, or about one million and a half sterling on the aggregate annual consumption of the people of Great Britain and Ireland; that these protecting duties have now been in force twelve years, many of them years of great distress to the agriculturists and manufacturers of the country, during which the West Indian sugar farmers have received eighteen millions sterling for their sugars over the price at which sugars might have been purchased in the markets of England if the West Indian planters had not been protected from the effects of a fair competition. - That it is from the forced and unremitted cultivation of sugar in the comparatively inferior and exhausted soils of the British West Indian islands, excited by the hope of high profits, that the sufferings of the negroes chiefly arise, and that upon the showing of the planters themselves this forced cultivation is solely kept up by the artificial stimulus of bounties and protecting duties, which impede the commerce of Great Britain, and operate as an oppressive tax on the

public. - That when the exhaustion of the soils, and the ruinous and expensive system of slave cultivation and of nonresidence prevent the importation of sugars from the West Indian islands at the price for which they could be obtained from various parts of the world, the petitioners humbly conceive that the West Indian planters have no just claim to bounties and protecting duties to enable them to continue an improvident speculation. - That the petitioners humbly submit that the bounties and protecting duties on sugar, for the benefit of a comparatively few individuals, who hold their fellow-subjects in slavery, ought not, in justice to the agricultural and manufacturing interests of this country, to be continued. - That, next to British farming produce, sugar is the chief article of domestic consumption, and ranks among the necessaries of life. - That the effect of abrogating the bounties and protecting duties on sugar would be, to transfer the cultivation of that article to the East Indies, and other places where it can be produced by the free labour of native farmers, and at little expence. - That this transfer would tend to increase the growth of the proper food of the negro British subject in the West Indies, diminish his fatigues, his privations, and his sufferings, and, by rapidly increasing the black population, would so reduce the price of slaves, and facilitate manumissions, that the slave system would gradually become extinct, without violence or commotion. - That your petitioners, therefore, on behalf of thousands of innocent foreigners, and of hundreds of thousands of their fellow-subjects, forcibly held in slavery; on behalf of the people of England, whose rights and liberties are invaded in the persons of innocent Englishmen, denied that justice which ought to be extended with rigid impartiality to the powerful and to the helpless, to the black colonist as to the white; on behalf of the King, nearly eight hundred thousand of whose subjects are wrested from the guardianship of his protecting hand within his own dominions, by those who strip their sovereign of the attributes of his crown, and annihilate the civil existence of a portion of

his people, equal in number to the population of a principality; on behalf of the consistency and the credit of the nation, whose cannon so recently swept the ramparts of Algiers, and dealt death to thousands on the African shore, that a barbarous people might be compelled to abstain in future from reducing into slaves, not the subjects of this country merely, but those of all other European powers, and to act on principles of which Britain is the public champion, and of which her West Indian slave-owners are as publicly the unpunished and daily violators; on behalf of the suffering manufacturers of England, whose trade with nearly the whole of South America, with Mexico, with Hayti, with China, with New Holland, and above all with India and her one hundred millions of inhabitants, is checked and stunted in its growth, because protecting duties and bounties prevent those countries from sending to England their sugars in exchange for the products of British industry, and this in order that the slave cultivation of the West Indies may be exclusively encouraged; on behalf of every virtue, and of every interest that is dear to Englishmen, your petitioners implore your honourable house to take into your earliest consideration the repeal of the protecting duties and bounties granted to the cultivators of sugar by slave labour; that whatever difficulties the slave question may present under other aspects, the people of England may at least be delivered from the bitter consciousness of maintaining, by oppressive and unnecessary premiums, a system of iniquity degrading to the national character, criminal beyond all other modes of robbery and violence, subversive of every legal and every constitutional principle, and equally at variance with the dictates of sound policy, humanity, and justice."

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INQUIRIES

RELATING TO

NEGRO EMANCIPATION.

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INQUIRIES

RELATING TO

NEGRO EMANCIPATION.

CHAPTER I.

On the Duty of delivering the Slaves in our Colonies from the despotic control of their present Masters without delay, and of placing them immediately in the best situation they are now capable of filling.

It is much to be wished that the friends of the slaves could be induced to examine thoroughly their own feelings and

conduct, in relation to the subject of emancipation.

If such an investigation were made, I believe it would be found, that even amongst those whose hearts are full of kindness and compassion towards the slaves, and who are making strenuous exertions in their cause, a great proportion are yet not just towards them: that is, that they do not feel the rights of the negroes and our duties towards them, in the same manner and with the same force that they would feel similar rights of white or civilized people and similar duties towards them. I believe very few of us are not more or less in this manner respecters of persons, though many are so quite unconsciously; and this unobserved partiality, hindering even many of the kindest from being perfectly just, is probably the cause of the otherwise unaccountable inconsistency and irrationality of our conduct in regard to emancipation.

The conviction of a great part of the nation seems to be, that the negroes are grossly wronged by being held in slavery at all; and that they are grievously oppressed (with some exceptions) by those whose slaves they are. But how few of those who acknowledge and lament this evil, do in a straight forward manner and in earnest seek to obtain its removal! How few there are, on the contrary, who, when they acknowledge it, do not at the same time decide that the root of the evil shall remain undisturbed, till some indefinite and imaginary period, in they know not what century!

We acknowledge that nearly a million human beings are held in unjust bondage, by men who by hard usage and neglect have so stupified and depraved them, that they are become, as these men say, unfit to be put in possession

of liberty.

"Therefore," we proceed to say, "let them be left in the hands of the men whose treatment of them has been the sole cause of their being reduced to this state, till they shall, somehow or other (we cannot tell how), emerge from it. Let them continue to be governed by the very men whose ill usage has thus stupified and brutalized them, till they become intelligent and well disposed."

Oh, most lame and impotent conclusion!

We do not reason in this strange manner when we are called on to obtain justice for white men. If it were discovered, that a number of people had been placed by foul means in a lunatic asylum, and were very improperly treated in it, we should laugh at the proprietor if he were to attempt to persuade us, that as he and his predecessors had by neglect and cruel treatment deprived these people of their senses, so that they were unfit to be left to their own guidance, they must therefore remain with him till they are quite well. We should most assuredly not be satisfied with endeavouring to obtain a law to oblige him to treat them less improperly, but should insist on their being immediately placed under the care of fitter persons.

How completely is this obvious dictate of common sense disregarded in the case of the negroes! How strange it is that all who believe them to be very injuriously treated by those who hold them in slavery, should not unite in declaring that they ought to be immediately rescued from the dominion of those persons, and placed for the present under the care of others, if they are really in a state which disqualifies them for the immediate possession of complete

freedom.

It seems to have been almost taken for granted, without examination, that if they are not qualified for entire freedom, they must of necessity continue to be slaves to their masters. But this is not the only alternative; there are other measures in our power; we may, while it is thought necessary, still

impose some peculiar restraints upon them, and yet with-

draw them from the despotic power of their masters.

Even however if this were the only alternative, and if it were ascertained that the slaves are not well qualified for liberty, it does not appear certain that we ought therefore to leave them in bondage. We should only have a choice of evils, and we ought not to choose without a much more careful investigation of the subject than has hitherto been made. It is certain that the slave-holders are as ill qualified for the exercise of arbitrary power as the slaves can be for the exercise of freedom. No one can deny this who has read the Annals of Berbice, the Mauritius, and the Bahamas; and who knows the atrocious nature of the slave laws made by the colonists, and the appalling rate of mortality amongst the slaves in most of the sugar colonies—a rate which must be the result of extreme ill-treatment of some kind or other: and it must be from indolence of mind (if it is not from partiality) that we implicitly assent to the notion, that it is better that the masters should be left in a situation in which they have shown that they will grossly abuse their power, than that the slaves should be placed in a condition in which they may possibly abuse their liberty. The arbitrary dominion of the master is now in existence, and has long been so; and we feel as if it were more safe and prudent to let things go on in their accustomed course, than to open a new one, which may be likewise productive of evils. But we are not justified in taking it for granted that it is most safe and prudent to go on in the old course: old evils are as injurious, and as much to be avoided as new ones; and if we blindly pursue the course in which we know the evils to be exceedingly great, without having so closely examined the subject as to be conscientiously convinced that very great evils will also be experienced in any other, it is not prudence, but timidity or indolence, which make us decide against the change.

It has never, I think, been shown, that immediate and entire emancipation would be likely to produce evils so great as to justify our leaving the negroes in slavery to their masters, even if one or other of these plans must necessarily be pursued. Those, however, who think this to be the case, will very imperfectly perform their duty towards the slaves, if they do not carefully inquire whether we have indeed no other choice; or whether some plan cannot be devised, by which the slaves might be withdrawn from the power of their masters, and yet placed, at first, under such restrictions as should prevent any dangerous consequences from the change: for nothing can be more certain (little thought of

as it is), than that we are bound by imperative duty to place these injured people, without delay, in the best situation they are now capable of filling; and we are guilty of criminal negligence, if we consent to leave them under the control of their masters without having satisfied ourselves, by patient investigation, that they cannot be removed from it with

advantage to themselves and safety to the whites.

If the negroes were now free, and if some measures to restrain their liberty were thought necessary, I cannot believe that there is one disinterested person in existence, who would suggest that those measures should be the placing them in the power of persons who had given proofs of their disposition to abuse such power, and who were known to believe it to be their interest to oppress them: neither would any such person propose that they should be reduced to the condition of slavery. It would be evident to every impartial person, that if it were necessary to place them under control, it ought to be, if possible, under that of persons whose minds had not been vitiated by the exercise of despotic power; and that the control should be of a kind which would give their managers no temptation to oppress them, or as little as possible, instead of being such as to give the utmost possible

temptation and opportunity to do so.

And if in the case of their actual freedom, it would, under the supposed necessity of imposing some restraints, be our duty to place the negroes under the care of persons who had never been slave-holders, and not to reduce them to the condition of slavery, it must be equally our duty to do so in the present circumstances. If, in the supposed case, it would be criminal to place them in the power of slave-holders, and to reduce them to the condition of slavery, it must be criminal to leave them in slavery to their masters in the real case. There is no more difference between permitting a criminal course of action to be continued and permitting it to be begun, than between permitting stolen goods to be retained and permitting them to be stolen. This is so certain, that it seems superfluous to state it, and yet it certainly is not generally believed; or rather, I should say, it is not thought of: for no one who honestly brings the subject before his mind can deny it. But the misfortune is, that the friends of the slaves do not, in earnest, bring before their minds the subject of immediate emancipation, or of their duties in regard to it; and yet all who give up the cause in a kind of despair, without having carefully examined whether the obstacles to it are indeed insuperable, must allow that their mode of disposing of the question is the mere refuge of idleness: they consent to the continuance of slavery, not

because they have convinced themselves that the evil is irremediable, but because they will not take the trouble of ascertaining whether some method might not be found of

delivering the negroes from it with safety.

This indolence of mind seems to be the chief cause of the acquiescence of the friends of the slaves in the indefinite postponement of emancipation; but it is perhaps not the only one, as there are some circumstances which prevent our perceiving the criminality of consenting to the continuance of slavery, as clearly as we perceive the criminality of con-

senting to its establishment.

In the first place, we are deceived by the very prevailing prejudice which makes us feel as if sins of omission were less criminal than sins of commission. We are, perhaps, led to feel in this manner partly by the nature of human laws, which are necessarily enacted almost entirely against positive offences; and thus we get the habit of considering such offences as the most criminal. But the laws of God, as declared in the scriptures, and even as written in our hearts (though we may neglect to read them there), are as much against one class of offences as against the other; and, therefore, though we may more excusably fall into one than the other, because we do so more unconsciously, yet when we become aware of what is the nature of our conduct, we offend as much by deliberately leaving undone what we

ought to do, as by doing what we ought not to do.

I believe that many are prevented also by indistinct fears from seeing clearly what their duty is on this subject; and that they are thus led to submit to the continuance of an evil, to the first establishment of which nothing could have induced them to consent. If the slaves were actually free, and some measures of restraint were necessary, they would see what the ill effects of this too great liberty really were; and would perceive the criminality of consenting to any restraints beyond what would be sufficient to obviate those particular evils, and to prevent the occurrence of any others which they clearly saw about to follow. But as it is, they can only conjecture what the evils attending emancipation might be; and there is great reason to believe that many feel vague and groundless apprehensions on the subject, and are thus deterred from joining in any measures to obtain the termination of slavery, though they would think it their duty to do so, if they were not under the influence of such fears. Those, however, who are in this state of mind, would do well to consider, that before they refuse their assistance to this cause, they are bound to take every means in their power to inform themselves concerning the real magnitude of the evils likely to attend emancipation; and when they have done this, it is as much their duty to help to prevent the continuance of any parts of the present rigorous system which are not necessary for the prevention of great evils, as it would be to prevent their adoption, if the slaves were now free.

If it were possible to persuade those who pity the slaves, and yet acquiesce in their remaining in their present bondage, to ascertain whether their acquiescence is the result of real conviction; or whether it proceeds from indolence, mistaken notions about their own obligations, or vague fears: many, I think, would become aware that they are as yet very far from having discharged their duty on this subject, and would set themselves to inquire in earnest, whether the obstacles to immediate emancipation are, indeed, as great as they fancy them to be; or whether they only think them so because they see them through a mist, or implicitly take for granted the truth of the representations of the colonists.

I shall attempt to show that the objections to this measure are not insuperable: for which purpose I will inquire, first—what are the changes which emancipation must necessarily make in the state of things, and what effects seem likely to result from those changes: secondly—I will collect a number of well-authenticated facts and statements concerning the negro character, for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not it is such as to dispose them to be inimical to the whites, or to become idle and disorderly members of society: thirdly—I will collect a number of well-authenticated facts and statements, showing what the conduct and condition of emancipated slaves have actually been in various places, times, and circumstances.

CHAPTER II.

Inquiry into the safety and practicability of immediately raising the Slaves into the condition of Freemen, under the safeguard of judicious precautionary regulations.

THE objections commonly urged against immediate emancipation are, that the enfranchised negroes would be likely to act with violence towards the white inhabitants of the colonies—that they would bring the planters to ruin, by refusing to labour for them—and that they would be incapable of taking care of their own interests.

I believe these objections appear more forcible at first sight, than they would do if the nature and probable effects

of the measure were particularly examined.

Emancipation would not necessarily increase very greatly the power of the slaves. It would take away the arbitrary power of the master; but almost any degree of that power might be transferred, as long as it was thought necessary, to the Government.

The only changes that appear absolutely essential to emancipation are, that the negro should work for wages instead of being driven to labour by the whip; that the power of inflicting arbitrary punishment should be taken from his employer; and that his evidence should be received by the magistrates and Courts of Justice.

But when these privileges were granted, temporary measures might at the same time be adopted, if thought necessary, to obviate the danger of the emancipated slaves forming conspiracies against the whites, and to oblige them

to labour for their maintenance.

Suppose, for instance, every colony were divided into districts, each district containing a nearly equal number of negroes; and that over each district a manager were appointed at such a salary as should make it a desirable situation for a well educated man of good character. Before him, if thought necessary, all the grown-up male negroes of the district might be obliged to present themselves once or twice a day; and they might be made liable to punishment if they were out of their own district for more than a limited time without a permit from their manager. Perhaps, however, the danger of conspiracy might be obviated by various regulations of a less restrictive nature. The newly emancipated slaves might at first be absolutely prohibited from having any kind of arms in their possession; it might be made a punishable offence for them to have them, or for others to furnish them with them, and a right of search in suspicious circumstances might be given to Government. Regulations might be made to prevent their assembling together in numerous bodies, something like those which were made some years ago in England, to guard against a similar apprehended danger; and various other measures of a precautionary nature might be adopted, and continued till no danger of this kind could any longer be feared with any shadow of reason.

If there is any danger that the emancipated slaves would refuse to support themselves by labour, those who have no means of subsistence might be obliged to work by laws similar to those of this country. If this were not thought a sufficient security, the managers appointed to regulate affairs on the first change, might be authorised to take care that all the male negroes of above a fixed age, who had no other means of supporting themselves, should regularly hire themselves as labourers; and they might first assist in arranging the wages, and preventing either the masters or the labourers

from taking unfair advantage of each other.

The expense attending any such plan of emancipation would no doubt be considerable; but we have no right* to refuse to be at any practicable expense by which we can do something like justice to those whom we have so grievously injured; and it is probable that the expense need not be of long continuance; for if the slaves are not now capable of taking care of their own interests, they would soon become so by the adoption of a plan by which they must learn to manage their own affairs in a great measure; and, after the inconveniences attending the immediate change were got over, there could be no more difficulty in the arrangements to be made between the land-owners and the labourers than there is in our own country; and when the emancipated slaves had been for a short time in a condition of so much greater comfort than that to which they had been accustomed, the greatest alarmists would surely lose their fears of insurrection.

The expense of making compensation to the slave-holders would probably be considered as the greatest in which emancipation would involve the nation: but (even on the supposition of their being entitled to complete compensation for any loss they might sustain) this expense need not alarm us; as, except in the case of those who keep slaves to hire to others, their loss could not be very great. Indeed there is great reason to believe that they would, on the whole, be considerable gainers by the change, when the emancipated slaves worked for them as free labourers, which they must do or starve. The immediate pecuniary saving made by employing slaves instead of free labourers, would perhaps not be so great as we are apt at first to suppose: the expense of food, clothing, and lodging, the master must pay in either case; so the only increase of expense in this respect will be that which may accrue from the degree in which the food, clothing, and lodging of the free labourer may be superior to those of the slave. The only other saving made by the slave employer is of that part of his wages which the labourer is able to lay by, or which he spends in obtaining some little comforts or gratifications in addition to absolute necessaries. It seems probable that both these savings are fully balanced

by the constant expense of recovering runaways*, the necessity of employing some of the most valuable slaves as drivers—and the expense of maintaining the slaves when sick or past labour, which must fall for the most part on the master, though he sometimes contrives to evade it by abandoning them in sickness or age, and obliging them to support

their wretched existence by beggary.

If, on the whole, however, the sum absolutely expended by the master who employs slaves is less than that expended by the master who pays wages to freemen; there is no doubt that this saving is greatly over-balanced by the additional quantity of work performed by the free labourers. It appears, from the experiments of Mr. Steele† and others, that the negroes, even while they are slaves, will do much more work in the same time when they are paid for their labour, than when they work under the cart-whip: and it seems to be universally acknowledged, by all impartial persons who have had the opportunity of making the comparison, that the employment of free labourers is far more profitable to the master than the employment of slaves.

Those persons whose property consists in slaves only, whom they hire out to work for others, would no doubt require compensation; but they are so small a class, that a liberal compensation might be made to them without any

considerable expense to the nation.

Let us now examine what would be likely to be the effect of the changes which have been mentioned as essential to

emancipation.

The greatest change would be, that the negroes would no longer be compelled to work for their masters by the cartwhip, the stocks, and imprisonment. The only evil effect that can be apprehended from this change is, that they might refuse to labour at all, or to labour for their former masters, when they were emancipated. That they should refuse to labour at all seems to be absolutely impossible, for they (with such exceptions as are not worth considering in relation to this part of the subject) have no property; even the huts in which they live belong to their masters: neither have they in general any kind of skill, except in the cultivation of sugar, cotton, or coffee. They cannot take possession of the property of the whites, as their new condition will not free them in any respect from the restraints of the law; nor in any manner enable them to resist the civil and military power, which has always been found sufficient to subdue them with ease when some intolerable oppression has led

them to attempt resistance. What then could they do, if they would not starve, but work for the whites for wages? Almost all of them would probably continue to work as hired labourers for the same persons for whom they had formerly worked as slaves; for why should they leave their neighbours and friends, or the house they are in and the provision-grounds which they have cultivated? both of which they might continue to hold on paying rent for them, and for which they could procure no substitutes elsewhere except

upon the same condition.

It seems almost certain that the great majority would remain where they are, and continue to work for the same masters: any people in their circumstances would be likely to do so; but more especially the negroes, because their local attachments are peculiarly strong: this is a well known fact, of which numberless proofs might be given. Dr. Dickson says,* "like the rest of mankind the negroes love their native spots, and venerate the dust of their ancestors, which they inter either close to their huts, or within them, under their beds. So powerful indeed is this local and filial attachment in the negroes, that it is dangerous to remove their habitations, even to a more healthful part of the same estate. From such a removal one of the most humane and exemplary characters in Barbadoes lost fifty of his people in one year."-" Bought creole slaves," says Dr. Collinst, "must be seasoned not so much to the climate as to the plantation;" to its new arrangements, new objects, and the new connections which it presents. What, then, but a mortality hardly exceeded by that of the newly imported Africans, can be expected from the violent seizure of the slaves under the present law of extent; their imprisonment (till sold), the sale at open outcry, and the inhuman separation of beings so affectionately attached to their homes and their kindred? It is nearly forty years since I first witnessed the sale of a numerous gang of plantation-slaves in a gaolyard, and I now remember it as one of the most affecting scenes I ever beheld, even in a land of slavery. "It is inconceivable," says Mr. Long+, "what numbers have perished in consequence of the law for the recovery of debts, which permits slaves to be levied on, and sold at vendue. By this means they are frequently torn from their native spots and their dearest connections, and transported into a situation

^{*} Mitigation of Slavery, p. 209. Dr. Dickson was private secretary to the late Honourable Edward Hay, Governor of Barbadoes.

[†] COLLINS'S Practical Rules for the Management of Negro Slaves, p. 380. ‡ Long's History of Jamaica, Vol. ii., p. 435.

unadapted to their health, labouring under discontent, which co-operates with change of place and circumstances to shorten their lives."

Lord Nugent, at a county meeting held in Buckingham in 1826, told the following anecdote on this subject:-"I would that those who deny to the poor slave a participation in feelings like our own, who libel the justice of creating providence, and would cancel the charter by which God has given feeling and soul to universal man—I would that they had but heard the testimony on that point, as I did, of a slave master, but one of the kindest of human beings, a gentleman who resided long on his property at St. Vincent's. He told me, that after a few years' residence there, finding that the village in which his gang lived was unhealthy and incommodious, he looked about for some better spot to build habitations upon for them. He fixed upon one with all the advantages that situation and good air, and the inestimable blessing there of good water, could give them, and he employed the gang to collect materials for building. One day, as he was superintending his preparations, one of the gang advanced to him as spokesman, and begged he would be kind enough to say what he was making those preparations for. He pointed out the advantages of the scite on which they stood, and told them, he meant to remove them from the unhealthy swamp in which they were living. Suddenly a strange and universal groan burst from the gang. Divers slaves came up to him in attitudes of sorrow and supplication. They pointed to their village; one said, "under that tree lies the body of a child I lost in its infancy." Another, "there are buried my parents." A third, "in that village I lived with my wife; I lost her: do not remove us from that spot."

Sir William Young, Governor of Tobago, says, "The creole slave is attached to his place of birth and home as strongly as Goldsmith's peasantry wandering from the deserted

village."

Surely these statements give reason to think that very few of the negroes would voluntarily leave their present places of abode; and if they remain in them they must necessarily continue to work for their present masters, as on no other condition would they be allowed to keep possession of their huts and provision-grounds. This opinion is confirmed by the account that Colonel Malenfant gives of the conduct of the emancipated negroes in St. Domingo, where he was a landed proprietor, and for some time lived on and managed his own property. He tells us, that not a single negro*

left his master when liberty was given to them by the French commissioners; and they were so tractable, and so little desirous of making an improper use of their newly-acquired liberty, that in 1793 the negroes* of several plantations in his neighbourhood, the proprietors or managers of which were thrown into prison, came to him to beg him to direct them in their work.

If however in some cases the negroes when emancipated should not choose to work for their former masters, it does not appear that he would be exposed to any great inconvenience from the circumstance, as he would probably be able to hire other labourers; for as all the negroes would be obliged to work for their livelihood, there would be the same number of labourers as before; and as the quantity of work to be done would remain the same also, there seems no reason why the business should not, after a short time, be arranged with nearly as much ease as it is in this country.

Depriving the master of the power of inflicting arbitrary punishment does not seem likely to produce any bad consequences; this power would be unnecessary as a means of making the negroes work, for which purpose the stimulus of receiving wages would be more effectual; and if it is supposed to be useful in enabling the master to guard against conspiracies, powers equally efficacious might be given to the

magistrates for this purpose.

Another change would be, that the negroes, when injured, might complain to the magistrates without the risk of being flogged for so doing if their complaints were not thought to be fully proved; and that they might give evidence in the courts of law in more serious cases. It does not appear that these changes could endanger the safety of the whites (except, indeed, that of criminals who may now violate the laws with impunity in consequence of the rejection of slaveevidence), as the magistrates and judges would still be whites, and would not be disposed to give more credit to the evidence of the negroes than it was justly entitled to; and even the juries would doubtless at first consist principally of whites, or of persons who have never been slaves; if it were thought essential they might at first consist entirely of such; though it appears from Mr. Steele's accounts+, that his negroes, even in the state of slavery, were adequate to the office in such cases as were brought before them: and they do not appear to have possessed any peculiar advantage before he called them to serve on juries on his plantation, or

to have been better qualified for such service than the slaves

on any other estate would have been.

The chief danger apprehended from emancipation—that of its giving to the negroes increased power and opportunity of forming conspiracies against the whites—probably appears greater to the minds of many than it really is, because many seem to imagine that the slaves are now much more restricted in their movements, and more under constant inspection, than they really are; and also, because they do not sufficiently consider that though the change may give them more opportunities of forming conspiracies, it must at the same time make them much less desirous of doing so.

It is true that the slaves cannot, by law, quit the plantations to which they belong without a written pass, under the penalty of being taken up, and punished as runaways; but it appears from the statements of many residents in the colonies, that but little restraint is in fact put on their movements, unless they are suspected of being about to run away, or to make a complaint against their master, overseer,

or driver.

Mr. Bickell speaks of great crowds of slaves* whom he used to see in Jamaica, going to the market at Kingston, from places fifteen to thirty miles distant from that town. He says he has often met three or four hundred in the space of two or three miles, many of whom travel all night, and are absent from home from Saturday to Sunday evening.

Other writers mention that the slaves, after their work is done, frequently go to visit friends on distant plantations, and stay out all night, dancing, or otherwise amusing

themselves.

Mr. Cooper says[†], "Many of the negroes have friends whom they will visit at a great expense of labour. Being of necessity occupied all day, they are obliged to avail themselves of the night; during which season they will walk miles, some to see their wives, and others for different purposes. I have heard the negroes declare, that when massa's work is done they are free, and will not, unless main force be employed, consent always to remain on the estate at night."

Dr. Dickson[†] speaks of great crowds of negroes, or mulattoes, in Barbadoes, who collect to dance (chiefly on Sundays), by day or by night, especially near the towns, with little or no interruption, unless their noise happens to

disturb the immediate neighbourhood.

* West Indies as they are.

[†] Facts illustrative of the Condition of the Negro Slaves in Jamaica, by THOMAS COOPER, p. 34. Mr. Cooper lived three years on a plantation in Jamaica.

¹ Mitigation of Slavery, p. 361.

Mr. Stewart says*, "Plays or dances very frequently take place on Saturday nights, when the slaves on the neighbouring plantations assemble together to enjoy this amusement. It is contrary to the law for the slaves to beat their drums after ten o'clock at night; but this law they pay little

regard to."

It seems clear then that the slaves at present have many opportunities of meeting together to form conspiracies; and if they are not disposed to do so now, when they would have so much to gain by success, why should they be so disposed when they would have so much less to gain by it? If it should be said, that the slaves fear to make an ill use of the liberty thus connived at by their masters, because they know that it is illegal; and that their meetings may be instantly stopped, and themselves punished for attending them, if any suspicious circumstances appear, it should be considered that restraints in some degree similar might be imposed at first upon the emancipated slaves, if they should appear to be really necessary.

But, on many occasions, the residents in the colonies have shown great confidence in the peaceable disposition of the

negroes, both slaves and free.

Dr. Dickson+, who lived thirteen years in Barbadoes, says, "The general confidence which subsists between the whites and blacks in Barbadoes, is strongly exemplified in the great crowds of negroes and mulattoes who collect to dance, by day and by night (as above mentioned), with little or no interruption. Another, and a very troublesome example of this confidence, is seen in the total neglect of police in the Not a regular soldier had been seen in Barbadoes for many years preceding December 1778, and the militia had become totally inefficient; yet the nocturnal dancing, fiddling, drumming, and drunken quarrels of the town negroes, not to mention their more silent depredations, caused not the slightest surmise of any improper combinations." In Barbadoes indeed the negroes, both slaves and free, have given repeated proofs that they are worthy of confidence.

Dr. Dickson; observes:—"During the American war, considerable bodies of slaves were trusted with pikes and cutlasses, for the defence of Barbadoes. The free negroes and mulattoes had fire-arms. Excepting the Governor's lifeguard, and the town volunteers, they were far better disciplined than any white corps in the island; and I remember

STEWART'S View of the past and present State of Jamaica, p. 272.

† Mitigation of Slavery, p. 361.

Idem, p. 362.

that brave and worthy veteran, General Tottenham, offending the white militia, by expressing his preference of the free people of colour. I may defy any man to produce a single instance of either slaves or free negroes manifesting the least sign of insubordination. On the contrary, a spirit of attachment to their country, and of loyalty to 'Grandy Massa,' animated the blacks and mulattoes, both slaves and free, during the whole of the American war. Above all, the great hurricane of 1780 put the colony entirely in the power of the negroes. The arms, ammunition, and provisions were destroyed; all artificial distinctions levelled in the dust; and the government itself for some time dissolved, or laid entirely at the mercy of the black majority. Yet, amidst this awful scene of desolation, the negroes remained quietly on the wrecks of the estates, even where their proprietors, or managers, were numbered among the dead. More alarm, indeed, was excited by about a thousand surviving prisoners of war, who had scrambled from among the ruins of the gaols, than by the whole body of the slaves; though the prisoners also behaved very well."

It is not in Barbadoes only that this confidence is shown in the peaceable intentions of the blacks. Mr. Bickell says, that in Jamaica the people of colour, and the free blacks, are all armed, and allowed to buy additional arms; and that the efficient or able-bodied men of both classes are trained as

militia.

The magistrates of St. Thomas and Santa Cruz have more than once declared, that the baptized negroes are a greater

security to them than their forts*.

Mr. Stephen tells us +, that, during the revolutionary wars with France, the colonial assemblies called the slaves to their aid. "They either treated with the master, or made compulsory draughts from the plantations; and, when the important service was performed, they restored the survivors of their sable defenders to the gang, to work again under the whip, paying the private owners the value of the killed and wounded. These black corps acted everywhere unexceptionably well, and materially contributed to the security of several of our islands. The invasions which they were immediately destined to repel did not take place; but there is reason to believe that Victor Hugues would have attempted a coup de main at St. Christopher and other colonies, if he had not been aware of this defensive expedient, of which he well knew the force: for the dreadful ravages of the yellow

^{*} Succinct View of the Mission, &c., by the Churches of the Brethren.
† The Slavery of the British West India Colonies delineated, p. 423.

fever, and the fatal war in St. Domingo, had together so far drained our numerous windward and leeward islands of European garrisons, as to leave them, in that respect, quite defenceless. Accordingly, after the peace of Amiens it was felt, and acknowledged by the assemblies, that their black troops had probably saved them from conquest, and from a revolution of the most terrible kind." I wish those who fear for the safety of the whites if the slaves were emancipated without a long previous preparation, would consider well the facts just stated. Can there ever be a time when it will be more in the power of the blacks to injure the whites than it was then? The white soldiers were reduced by war, and by the yellow fever (to which the negroes are not subject), and the free coloured people had long formed the strength of the colonial militia. Had the armed slaves and the free black militia then joined together, they could no doubt with ease have overpowered the whites: and the slaves had then every thing to gain by a change of condition. Yet, in these trying circumstances, the blacks, both slaves and free, all behaved in an exemplary manner. If then neither the slaves nor the negroes who had purchased their freedom, showed any inclination to injure the whites when it was so much in their power to do so, why should it be thought that the free gift of emancipation would create such a desire in those who receive it? Its effect must surely be all in the opposite How could the negro be more desirous of injuring the whites because they had voluntarily ceased to injure him? This could hardly be the effect of such a change on persons of any disposition; but on persons of the grateful and gentle character which belongs to the negro race, it is particularly unlikely. There seems little reason to doubt that the negro would receive emancipation, not as what it really would be-a tardy and imperfect* act of justice—but as a boon of mercy; and that it would inspire him therefore with a feeling of gratitude towards the whites in general, which would not be withheld from those with whom he is immediately connected, if they behaved with any degree of kindness, or even with ordinary prudence and good temper.

[•] Mere emancipation would surely be only an imperfect act of justice. It cannot be denied that Mr. Pownall was correct in saying, at the Surrey Auti-Slavery Meeting, that justice required that the slave "should receive an arrear of wages, and so have a capital to begin freedom upon."

CHAPTER III.

On the Negro Character.

It was proposed next to study the negro character, with the view of ascertaining whether it is such as to make it probable that the negroes, if emancipated, would either be inimical to the whites, or become idle and disorderly mem-

bers of society.

From a great number of statements, made by persons of various classes residing in the colonies, it appears that the natural disposition of the negro is gentle, amiable, grateful, affectionate, and docile; that he is remarkably subject to the influence of religion, both on his feelings and on his conduct: and that he is active and laborious when placed in circumstances in which his condition can be improved by the exercise of industry.

These particulars I shall proceed to prove, by a series of extracts from the writings of many persons of the greatest

respectability.

Mr. Bickell, a clergyman, who lived nearly five years in Jamaica, says*:-" The hearts of the negroes appear to be open to conviction, and seem prepared for the reception of the great truths of the Gospel. I have seen the eyes of many a one sparkle with joy at the preaching of Gospel news; and they seem to be reanimated, and transformed into different beings, when told that Christ died for them, and that, by faith and grace, they may be saved as well as we. It has also its proper effects upon their conversation and conduct, for I knew several negroes in Port-Royal who pulled in canoes or other boats for themselves on Sundays (as well as for their masters on week days), give up a part of their own day from religious motives, though their subsistence almost depended upon it. An anecdote of one in particular I shall relate. I had opened the church in the afternoon, principally for the slaves and free people of colour, as those who were employed in canoes, wherries, &c. could not attend in the morning. On landing at Kingston on a Monday morning, I overheard a dialogue between a canoe man and a negro woman of his acquaintance. They did not see me at first; but the woman addressed him, and expressed her surprise at not seeing him yesterday afternoon, 'Oh!' he said, 'me was not up yesterday afternoon, me go to church now.'- 'Ah!' said she, 'you go to church?- 'Yes,' replied he, 'the minister open the church twice every Sunday, and me go to church in the

afternoon now; me go to heary good, and no work all day.' 'Ah!' she replied, 'dat very good of the minister to open church in the afternoon for poor neaga.' More of the same kind was said, but I had been walking near, and when they saw me the conversation was put an end to. There are very few white people, I fear, who, if they had to work hard all the week for their master, and had only Sunday, with a trifling allowance to provide for themselves all the week following, would give up a part of that Sunday to go and hear a sermon. The slaves who work in boats, get half a dollar a week from their owners, besides the Sunday to themselves; but those who know the heavy and hard work (for four negroes) of pulling a large canoe, with six or eight persons in it, three or four times a day from Kingston to Port-Royal and back, a distance of six miles, will allow that two shillings and two pence sterling will go but a little way in food and liquor-for liquor of some kind they must have in such labour, and in so very hot a climate. In general the country parishes are almost destitute of schools. In the towns, however, a few of the slaves can read: in Kingston many of them can read a little, as they have more facilities of obtaining a lesson now and then in that place, there being so great a number of free blacks. In Port-Royal, also, several of the slaves could read, and were very anxious to get books. I gave to some few of them elementary school books, and to others religious tracts. two or three instances, I sold bibles or testaments for the society to negro slaves, who had leave from their masters to purchase; and, on examination, I found that they could read pretty well: they had learnt the art by stealth, sometimes getting a lesson from one, and sometimes from another, and appeared to be very proud of the acquirement, considering the Bible quite a treasure."

Mr. Bickell's account of the desire felt by the slaves to attend public worship, and of the good effects produced on their conduct by religious principle, is confirmed by a great number of other writers:—a few instances shall be given here, taken chiefly from the Missionary Register, and from the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine: many of these instances afford likewise interesting proofs of their love and

gratitude towards their religious teachers.

Mr. Smith, a missionary sent by the London Missionary Society, writes in 1821, or 1822, of the Christian negroes under his care at Le Resouvenir, in Demerara:—" Some of the members of our church are exemplary christians. Of by far the greater part of the baptized negroes, or even of our members, I cannot speak in such terms of praise;

yet I can say that, in general, they manifest such a subjection to the gospel of Christ, that when they are made acquainted with the will of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, they are willing to conform to it. The plantation slaves are usually allowed a piece of ground to cultivate. Sunday is the only time which they have for cultivating these grounds, and for carrying the produce of them to market. Although this practice is a shameful violation of the sabbath, yet the trifling profit which they find in going to the market in town strongly attach them to it. With pleasure I see many of the baptized negroes abaudon this practice—a practice so specious in its appearance to them, and so deeply rooted by custom, that nothing but a sense of religion could cause them voluntarily to relinquish it. Many, very many, now neither go to market nor work their

grounds on a Sunday."

Mr. Edmonson writes from Mahaica, in Demerara, in 1826:-" Our chapel in Mahaica is attended by negroes from twenty-four estates, though the principal part of the congregation comes from about fourteen of those within a few miles of the village. Those from the other plantations are often unable to attend in consequence of the distance, or, at least, to reach in time to get into the chapel before every form and aisle is crowded to excess. It is pleasing to see the regularity of those who can attend. They allow no kind of weather to hinder them from coming to the house of prayer. On three sabbath mornings since my arrival it has rained almost in torrents, and on the first of them I feared we should have no congregation at all; but when the time arrived, we saw the people coming in groups through the rain, and our chapel was crowded as at other times. This is always the case, and they generally bring with them a change of linen, which they manage to keep dry, and put on when they reach Mahaica. At both our places up the coast we are likely to receive an abundant reward for our The congregations are still increasing; and, from the surrounding population of both places, and the general desire of the negroes for religious instruction, we have reason to believe they will continue to increase abundantly. earnestly wish that a second missionary may soon be sent. It would then be in our power to have divine service at Mahaica every Lord's-day; and as the slaves in this colony are fed by their masters, and have every Sunday at their own disposal, this would prove of infinite advantage to them. Mahaica chapel is far too small to accommodate the numbers that attend. Our society, when present, fills it; and during preaching, all the forms, aisles, and steps, are exceedingly

crowded, and hundreds are frequently obliged to stand outside. Besides these, I believe many more would attend if they had any chance of being accommodated; but as they are disappointed from time to time, after the long and fatiguing walks they take, they get discouraged." In a later account it is said of Mahaica chapel:-" We have made more benches, placing the old ones nearer together, allowing twenty-two or twenty-one inches for a bench to be fixed, and a few even less than twenty-one inches. Consider, and pity, and help our poor people in this hot climate; only twenty-one inches allowed for a form, and a row of people, seated as close as they can crowd, the knees of one row touching the backs of those before, and the aisles crowded as close as they can stand, and hundreds outside! Indeed, more than nine hundred are in society at Mahaica, besides many on trial, and the chapel will hardly seat six hundred, however well stowed. At the love-feast last Sunday week, the members present could not all get into the chapel, and yet among these, only eleven free members, and scarcely twice that number of free people, attend the chapel. The multitude are slaves, poor and needy, but earnestly seeking salvation."

Another of the London Society missionaries writes from Demerara, "the scriptures are highly prized by many of the slaves. Several who cannot read will carry bibles or testaments three or four miles, in order to have a few verses

read to them."

Mr. J. Wood writes from Mahaica, March 30, 1828:— "Great numbers continue to attend the preaching, especially at Mahaica, where there are often many more than the chapel will hold. A spirit of hearing prevails remarkably throughout the circuit. We have good reason to believe that the members generally are sincere and pious. One strong proof of this is their abstinence from outward gross sins. When relating their experience, they seldom fail to speak of these with detestation and regret. The grand moral change is especially manifest at the festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, which were formerly scenes of drunkenness, and almost all kinds of wickedness; but now very little of such practices is to be seen at those times. Dances were given as usual last Christmas, but our members made a firm stand, and could not be induced to attend them. We have reason to believe that their conduct on the estates is generally such as is worthy of the Gospel of Christ. Many of the testimonials of the managers are pleasing. From a near estate on which we have more than one hundred and twenty members, we have the intelligence that there is a

great change in the negroes since they attended the chapel; they are so attentive to their work that there is little trouble with them, and severe measures are seldom necessary. believe this is generally the case; the confessions of the converted negroes, though in the simplest language, are often full and significant. It is delightful to hear them praising God for giving his only begotten Son, and sending them the Gospel. One Christmas morning, about four o'clock, we were awakened from our slumbers by the singing of a large number of slaves at our gate, who had sung on the road from a neighbouring house; while they were lisping the high praises of God, and celebrating the arrival of that happy morn which brought the news of a Saviour's birth, my mind was filled with such a mixture of awe and delight as I cannot well describe. We published for preaching at five o'clock; but as they came so soon, we were under the necessity of beginning before the time. Our last love-feast was one of the most refreshing seasons that I have seen since I arrived here; while some were relating in their simple manner what God had done for their souls, a sacred awe of the divine presence seemed to be felt by all. Every eye was filled with tears; the scene was such as would have affected both friends and foes."

The Methodist missionaries in Antigua state, in 1821 or 1822, that several managers of estates bear testimony to the influence of religion on the slaves. One said—"A very great change has taken place in their conduct since they began to act from religious principles: the whip is not needful now." Another said—"The sound of the whip is now rarely heard on the estate." A missionary society formed among the negroes is zealously supported. schools are working a beneficial change in both adults and children. Mr. Thwaites writes:-" The improvement of the children has had an effect on the elder slaves: not only are the fiddle and dance abolished on Sundays, but they crowd the house of prayer." In the following year the committee say of the schools:-" There is one circumstance connected with the religious state of our societies which is calculated to excite much hope—the number of young persons united to us, whose minds are already well stored with religious truth. Their regular attendance on religious ordinances, their renunciation of the ensnaring follies of youth, and their truly christian lives, afford us great satisfaction. Thus whole families are growing up in the fear of the Lord, and the effect upon posterity cannot be estimated."

Mr. Warrener, a methodist missionary, writes:—" When I was in Antigua, one of the managers said to one of our

black members who was a slave—'Ben, go down to the boat and catch me some fish, I am going to have company to day (Sunday), and I will pay you for your trouble.' Ben said—'Massa, if you order me to go I must go, but me take noting for what me forced to do on a Sunday;'

the manager did not oblige him to go."

In the report sent from Antigua to the Church Missionary Society in 1826, it is said: - "The religious instruction conveyed in these schools (Sunday schools) appears to have been made to many a real blessing; and the most grateful feelings are cherished in the minds of such persons towards their friends and benefactors. Mrs. Thwaites, who is on a footing of the most affectionate intimacy with the pious slaves, writes :- 'The prayers of the converted negroes are peculiarly striking and affecting. The schools are never forgotten; they express their gratitude to God that they were instituted, as by that means the poorest slaves may be taught to read God's works, and trained up in the way in which they should go. Earnest prayers are offered up for the success of the schools and for the teachers, and particularly that the young people who fear God may be kept from evil, and may adorn the Gospel. They pray fervently also for their kind friends in England, who, they say, have never seen them; yet have loved them so much as to provide all things necessary for their instruction: Inspectors are appointed over these schools from the most promising negroes. At a meeting held for this purpose, several of the inspectors spoke very feelingly of the benefit which they had themselves derived from the schools, and from their care of others. Mr. Thwaites writes:- 'I remarked that the blessing of God had, in an especial manner, attended those who had, at the commencement of the schools, laid themselves out to forward the instruction of the young; and instanced Henry Cochrane, who not only laboured with his hands in building Bethesda school, but made himself useful as a teacher; and whose example first led us to establish the country schools. The power of divine grace had been more and more evident in this distinguished old negro, and he had left a good testimony behind him; he was supported in the midst of afflictions, and rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer for his lord and master. An active and pious inspector stood up and said, that she had great cause to bless God for the schools, and that she had ever been appointed to the office; her master was in England at that time, and she was then more at liberty to attend to the duties of the office than at the present; she regretted that it was now out of her power to have so much to do with the

children as formerly; besides attending noon and night school constantly, she had had under her care eight very little children, five of whom were taught to read soon. A second inspector, who devotes the greater part of her time to the benefit of young slaves, stood up and said, that she had cause to bless God that ever the schools were instituted that on one occasion, when letters were read from three Sunday scholars to their teacher, she felt deeply humbled at the thought, that even children had made greater progress than herself—she had been much edified while the children have been reading the scriptures, and having them explained to them. Her business as an inspector was a delightful one; she loved the children, and they loved her. A third inspector declared, that the school meetings had been a great blessing to her, and that her mind had often been instructed by what came from the lips of the little ones; she wanted words to express her gratitude to God for making a way for the outcast and the fatherless to receive instruction. A young man rose, and said, that he should be guilty of the highest ingratitude, if he did not acknowledge that he had received much good from his attendance on the schools; he felt so much under Sunday-school instruction at the Old Hope school, that it led him to determine on serve God; he loved the children, and rejoiced in their prosperity. Another truly pious young man stood up, and striking his breast, said, with a strong voice, and very emphatic words, peculiar to the negroes-'Tears ought to flow from my eyes, and blood from my heart, on account of what God has done for me by these schools. Oh, how shall I praise the Lord for this good work! blessed work! it has brought light into my dark sinful heart, and I pray God to spread it more and more."

Extract from the Journal of Mr. Britten, methodist missionary in Antigua:—

October, 29, 1827.

"I preached and catechised at Backmans: the congregation was large and serious. When I left the estate it was a lovely moonlight night; my ear was accosted with the sound of distant singing; as I drew nearer the negro houses I heard it more distinctly, and sat on my horse listening, while love, gratitude, and delight filled my heart. After hearkening awhile, I rode to the spot whence the sound proceeded, and found a company of young females collected together, and formed into a kind of half-circle; one of whom gave out, and the others all joined in singing, that sweet hymn, 'The loving kindness of the Lord.' I gave them some suitable advice, and was dismissed by them with a

most hearty and affectionate 'Good night, massa; good

ride, massa,' &c."

"The persecution in Jamaica, in 1807, obliged us" writes Mr. Gilgrass*, "to put away five hundred innocent slaves from our society, for we were liable to a fine of £.20 for each negro we instructed, and they to punishment for attending. The chapels and meeting-houses were shut while I and my wife were in the common gaol, Kingston; and when I came out, and began preaching on the restricted plan, I was obliged to appoint six door-keepers to prevent the slaves from entering the chapel, and violating the law. They would, however, come in their leisure time and stand on the outside. 'They would not,' to use their own words, 'make massa again to go to gaol; me no go in a chapel, but me hear at door and window.' We beheld them and wept, but could say nothing."

The missionaries of the united brethren write:—" Many negroes attend at Carmel and New Eden, from a distance of eighteen or twenty miles. Some of them come from the May-day Mountains, where a great awakening seems to have taken place among them." They speak elsewhere of the ardent desire of the negroes in the May-day Hills to have a

missionary resident among them.

Nearly two hundred persons had been baptized by Mr. Coultart, a baptist missionary at Kingston, in the course of the year 1821,"under the most satisfactory evidence of their being sincere followers of Christ. The artless expressions of some of these African converts, like those of their brethren in Sierra Leone, are very affecting, and powerfully descriptive of the work of grace on the heart." Mr. Coultart had visited Manchineel, which is about sixty miles from Kingston. The people are anxious for a missionary, and have begun to raise a fund for the creation of a place of worship. He had also visited the aged negro preacher, Moses Baker, at Montego Bay. He is now blind, but conducted the worship with the greatest propriety; and sustains a most exemplary character. The gentleman on whose estate he resides, spoke in the highest terms of the character and conduct of his negroes, which he ascribes to the influence of religion. In 1822, Mr. Coultart writes:- "A poor slave came to my house one morning to tell me that his heart troubled him much. He burst into tears, saying 'Oh massa, me too bad for Jesus Christ; me heart work too strong for him; it rise up against me, it give me no rest at all: me try for sleep-it no sleep-it go dis way, it go dat

WATSON'S Defence of Wesleyan Methodist Missions, p. 144.

way-it no go to Jesus Christ at all, massa. O massa, what me do?—what me do?—will Jesus Christ let me perish?' Here he was so completely overwhelmed as not to be able to say any thing more for a considerable time: then, quieting himself a little, he said with much feeling 'Me never do noting good for Jesus, yet him die for sinners: O may be, him die for me.' Another, after relating how her mind had been first awaking to serious concern, and that a friend to whom she had communicated her feelings had advised her to pray, added 'she den go back, and bow down on her sinful knee, and tell God, she no wish to keep on sin, but she no worthy to come, for she had done no good ting, but only eat sin, and drink sin, and peak sin all her sinful life: and now massa,' she said, in great agony, and tears of disappointment, 'Sin no leave me yet, massa.' A slave wished his owner to give him permission to attend with God's people to pray: his answer was, 'No, I will rather sell you.'- 'Will you,' said he, 'Suffer me to buy myself free if me can?'- 'If you do, you shall pay dearly for your freedom: as you are going to pray, £.250 is your price.' The common price for a slave, if a good servant, is £.140. 'Well, massa, it a great deal of money, but me must pray: if God will help me, me will try to pay you.' He has been a long time working hard; and at last sold all himself and wife had, except his blanket, to purchase liberty to pray in public; or in other words, to meet with those who love Jesus Christ! I often feel it painful indeed to refuse them immediate admission (to baptism), but we wish to obtain the consent of their owners, and to have as extensive a knowledge of their characters as possible before we receive them. Some of them weep when they are told to stop a little longer, and say, 'Massa, suppose dead take me, how me die when me know this my duty, and me no do it?' A female negro called on me from a distance of fifty or sixty miles. Here she is, dressed in a clean little jacket, as they are called in Scotland, and such as servant girls wear there; without stockings or shoes, though in the last stage of pregnancy. She has come to hear some word about Jesus, she says; for she has seen no servant of God for eight long years. She looked at the chapel that was building—she looked at me and then wept till she had no more power to weep. When she recovered, she told me, that she and her husband and small family were sold eight years ago to the person that owns her now, and her residence fixed on the same estate, where 'nothing but badness is to be seen—dere me hear no good word—me see no good work. O massa, me poor soul quite perish; him quite sick for de word.' When she went first to the estate her owner asked her if she prayed: 'Yes,' was her reply. 'Oh, that is bad,' he said, 'you will spoil all my negroes. Your religion is a bad thing, you must not spread it here.' 'O massa,' she replied 'religion no a bad ting. If your negro love God in him heart, him find something else to do than tief your fowl and your sugar; religion a good ting, when negro has plenty of it.'"

How would the reader like to learn, that as soon as this pious christian returned to the estate she belonged to, she was thrown down, stripped, and lacerated by the cart-whip? I do not know that this was the case; but we know that this might have been done, without any breach of law, if the overseer or driver happened to be out of humour:—and so it must be, as long as those who lament the wrongs of the

slaves are afraid to call for the only remedy!

Mr. Godden, a baptist missionary at Spanish Town, gives an affecting proof of the attachment felt by the negro christians towards their instructors.—"In the night of the fire, a poor young woman, a slave, whom I had previously baptized, exerted herself much in carrying water from the river; and when nearly exhausted, she inquired of the by-standers, 'Where my minista?' A person answered, 'He is burnt in his bed.' The poor thing fell down and expired immediately, without uttering another word."

Extract from a letter and journal of Mr. Young, Stoney Hill:-" It is with grateful feelings that I inform you of the continued prosperity of religion in this circuit—every passing week leaves us with an accession to our numbers; and what is still of greater moment, many of those who joined us last year in a state of great ignorance, now give scriptural evidences of their sincere conversion to God; and though our very excellent discipline has been regularly enforced, a few only have been put away." April 24, 1825. —"The surrounding country presents at any time an interesting object to the spectator; but to me it was peculiarly so this morning, when I beheld the negroes with their clean white dresses pouring down the sides of the different mountains, and hastening 'to the place where prayer is wont to be made.' As they approached I perceived that many of them had come several miles. I threw open my window, and bade them welcome. Every countenance was cheerful, and many prayers were offered up to Almighty God for the preservation of myself and family. I went into the pulpit, and found the chapel crowded." June 27 .- "I heard singing in an opposite direction. The tune I soon recognised. It was sung by a company of negroes met together to administer consolation to a poor sick man. The voice of

prayer succeeded that of praise." August 5 .- "To-day, as I passed through a sugar plantation, my attention was caught by the voice of melodious singing: on looking around, to ascertain from whom it proceeded, I found that it came from a gang of negroes who were working in a field at some distance. The tune was 'Gabriel,' which they had learned at our chapel, and which they now sang most harmoniously, beating time with the hoe as they digged up the earth." October 18.—"A missionary branch society was formed this evening at Grateful Hill. The chapel was so much crowded that several were prevented from getting in; but many of the negroes being most desirous of hearing climbed upon the roof, which being under repair afforded them several peep-holes, through which they could see the speakers. The scene was therefore as novel as it was interesting, for eyes darted through every aperture, and human countenances supplied the place of covering to the roof, which were sad or enlivened, according to the subject of the speaker." October 25 .- "Our late missionary meeting, at Stoney Hill, has excited in this community an interest far surpassing my most sanguine expectation. Every person who attended seems wishful to do something to facilitate its object. To-day I learned that a poor decrepid free woman was present at the meeting, and felt such sympathy with the heathen, that the next day she went to one of the collectors, and requested that her name might be put down for five pence. The collector, knowing her poverty, replied that she did not see how it was possible for her to give five pence; but the old woman was not to be resisted, for she told the collector that she intended to sit by the way-side begging, until she had obtained one five pence."

Mr. Young, in a letter, written March 6, 1826, when he was removed to Spanish Town, says:—"It was not without many painful feelings that I took my leave of Stoney Hill. Providence employed me as its humble instrument in commencing the society, and in superintending it for two years. I had the great pleasure of seeing in the circuit, before I left it, twelve leaders and five hundred and sixty-five members, as well as our salutary rules in full operation. It is true that several of those on trial are, as yet, very ignorant; but they are of course reclaimed from immorality, and in general exceedingly willing to be taught. Others of the members are sincerely converted to God, and can give a reason of the hope that is in them as scripturally

as any European christian that I have met with."

Mr. Scholefield, a Moravian missionary, writes from Irwin, in Jamaica, February 10, 1827:—" Surely there

can be no service so delightful as that in which a missionary is engaged, especially when he finds himself surrounded by numbers whose hearts and ears are open to receive the Gospel. The eagerness with which many of the poor negroes among whom I have been favoured to labour listen to the word of life, has often made me blush, when I considered how much greater have been my advantages from my earliest youth, and how small comparatively the use I have made of them."

Extract from a circular issued in support of a subscription to a baptist chapel, to be erected at Montego Bay, in Jamaica, 1827 .- "About three years ago, the Rev. Thomas Burchell, from the Baptist Society, was sent to this town. At that time there was not a congregation of twenty persons; but such was the interest excited among the negroes to hear the Gospel, and so suitable did they find its doctrines to their circumstances, that after a few weeks, the room at first occupied for worship became much too small to admit those who were anxious to attend. It was necessary to procure a larger, and this has been enlarged at different times, so that it is now capable of accommodating five hundred persons. Such, however, is the eager disposition of the negroes to attend the worship of God, that the congregation has increased to five times that number, so that a thousand persons crowd themselves into this room, while every other part of the house where the preacher's voice can be heard is equally thronged; and even then, hundreds are frequently obliged to go away disappointed. Many of these poor negroes travel after their week of labour, five, ten, fifteen, and even a greater number of miles, in the hope of hearing the word of God. They leave their homes at one, two, three, and four o'clock in the morning, according to the several distances which they have to come, that they may be present at the morning service, at six o'clock; and when once they have entered the chapel, many will remain there till public service recommences, lest, if they should leave it, they should be unable to regain admittance. The effect of such a crowded attendance in an upper room, only twelve feet high, under a vertical sun, may be easily conceived. The negroes themselves, inured as they are to the climate, often faint with the heat."

Mr. T. C. Morgan writes from Stoney Hill, May 7, 1827.—" The committee will be glad to learn that the society are blessed with a missionary spirit. A few of our poor but zealous people at Red Hills, have adopted a plan which is novel in this country, for the purpose of raising missionary-money:—riz. dedicating one plantain-tree out of

every thirty to the missionary cause. A plantain-tree is worth about seven shillings a year; and I understand, about thirty of these missionary-trees are already planted in the circuit."

A correspondent of the Bible Society writes from Jamaica, in 1827 or 1828.—"It has been supposed that bibles are useless here, because it is thought negroes can neither read nor are capable of learning; but this is a mistake; and such is their anxiety now to be able to read the bible, that they will get children who are at school by day to instruct them at night, for which they pay from 10d. to 1s. 3d.

currency per week."

Mr. Hyde, and some other Wesleyan missionaries, attended the estates of Mr. F. Willoch, in Montserrat, as religious instructors of the slaves, for four years, being the first missionaries who ever went on the estate. Unfortunately, Mr. Warner, the attorney of these estates, left the island; and though he did what he could to induce the new attorneys to continue these missionaries on the estates, he could not succeed. The new attorneys owned that the negroes had received the constant and best attention of the missionaries, but refused to let them remain, and put the slaves under the care of a clergyman of the church of England. Mr. Hyde writes, May 13, 1827, after he had been dismissed:-" As I rode through the estates the people affected me by their expressions of gratitude and sorrow. Some of their expressions were as follows: 'Massa, you leave us! Oh, it touch me to me heart!' and tears showed that they spoke the truth. 'Massa, you clear away the copse, and now dem other people come: but the Lord bless you, massa. You our first massa; you take me out of dark, and bring us to that blessed light. Well, massa, me never forget you. Thank you, me dear massa; and the Lord be with you.'" Can we believe that it would be dangerous to let such people as these work for wages, instead of being driven to labour by the cart-whip?

Extracts from letters and journal of Mr. Wood, dated Montserrat, September 30, 1827.—"I listened with pleasure to the simple, unadorned, but fervent testimonies of our people to the grace of God. One of our leaders, a black man, and a slave, told us, that at first he had many doubts about coming into society, lest his family should suffer by his religiously observing the Lord's day, which is generally employed by the negroes in their grounds: but he blessed God he found it otherwise." October 25.—"Two of our poor members, who live at Buncomb's Bay, had requested me to

go and see them. My guide brought me to the spot, which showed that the hand of industry had not been wanting to make even this place a residence of comfort. A neat garden surrounded a wattled house, the inside of which was clean and orderly: there were two apartments, the one for the hall, and the other for the chamber. The old woman was confined to her bed, and was waited upon by a kind and affectionate daughter. I administered the sacrament to her. How many are there who would gladly exchange colour with these happy negroes, so that they might have their content and peace!" November 26.—"'To-day we had our school examinations. We had a very large congregation, who were much gratified by the progress which the scholars have made. It would have done those persons good to have been here, who say that the blacks have little or no intellect. We had

children of all colours, and all did excellently."

" May 23, 1828.—In Montserrat the most permanent advantages have resulted through the establishment of your mission. There are often five places of worship open on a Christian sabbath: these are generally pretty well attended. There are besides a number of schools, which are at work, producing the most beneficial effects upon the minds of the rising generation. That prolific source of all evil-the Sunday market—is here abolished. This is the work of an individual, who (being sanctioned by the Legislature) engaged in its destruction, and accomplished it. That the practice is carried on by some in a secret manner may be correct; but the principal town is more quiet, and evinces the salutary influence of the Gospel more than any I ever saw in England. Your society here, though small, is an honourable appendage to the cause of methodism: if they are distinguished for one excellence more than another, it is for their invariable attachment to your missionaries, whose happiness they study, whose advice they seek, and in whose successes they rejoice. I have heard some of the earliest members speak of the first missionary, who effected the establishment of the mission, with streaming eyes: they have borne witness to his holy life-to his laborious efforts in preaching Christ-to his premature but triumphant death. Of the two who succeeded him I have heard honourable mention made in our love-feasts and band-meetings. Where the labours of men are thus deposited in the affectionate remembrance of a people, it would be an injustice to them to say they were unsettled, or carried away with novelty. I have not spent any time more agreeably than that which I have spent in Montserrat; and though there I had my share of sickness,

which even now clings to me, yet I do not regret that I left my native shores to labour amongst so kind and grateful

a people."

Mr. Oke, a methodist missionary at St. Christopher's, writes:-" February 9, 1822.-I am well aware that very incorrect views of the piety of our members in these islands have been formed. For my own part, I am confident that in numerous instances it is of the highest character. If love for their ministers and for one another be a criterion, in this they excel; for I bear them record that they could even lay down their lives for us. If liberality in supporting the cause of God be a proof of genuine christianity, in this they outvie all I have ever witnessed. If meeting in band be a token of deep piety, our members are unequalled in this. I have seen upwards of one hundred in the public bands, all of whom have a plan for meeting in private bands; and to attend a meeting of the bands is a feast indeed! Last night I was greatly delighted to hear several of them relate their experience; which they do in general with great warmth, and often with their eyes suffused with tears. How much I should like to be present to relate some of these sayings in your missionary meetings! Could the assemblies on those occasions hear a few of these Africans declare what God has done for their souls, they would be ready to shout the praises of the Almighty for conferring the honour on them of being the instruments of such glorious things; and I am confident it would have a powerful effect on their future exertions." Mr. Oke gives the following account of his leaving

St. Christopher's, after two years' residence there: -" March 27, 1824.—On leaving the beloved people of that favoured island my heart was pained, especially at the moment of separation. They had ever shown the warmest affection for me from the time of my arrival among them: but they never gave me such proofs of it as on my departure. Besides loading me with good things of various kinds, on the day that I left, for several hours previous to my going on board, a large number of them collected on the beach to bid me farewell; so that when I went down to get into the boat I became so surrounded, especially with negro children belonging to the Sunday school, and they laid hold on my hands, and arms, and clothes, in such a manner that I could not stir for some time; and when I had disengaged myself and jumped into the boat, some of them ran into the sea again to shake me by the hand, while their tears and cries were most affecting. Then they stood on the shore, and as long as they could be heard lifted up their hands and cried

Good bye,' &c."

Mr. Banks writes from St. Christopher's, in 1828 :- "The poor slaves on the estates hold prayer meetings amongst themselves at noon and in the evening; and these have been the means of much good. It is distressing to see our little chapels incapable of accommodating one-third of our congregations. The chapel at Sandy Point will only seat three hundred and thirty persons; and we have, including those on trial, one thousand four hundred persons connected with our society besides the children, and the crowds of others who would be glad to become regular hearers, but are driven away by want of room. My soul is often deeply affected to see the crowds outside, under the scorching sun or chilling dews, listening with eagerness for the word of life. A gentleman unconnected with us has made me a present of a large square sail, of which we have made a tent to fix in the chapel yard. Numbers bring their seats on their shoulders, and place themselves beneath it. Sometimes the chapel, tent, stable, servant's room, kitchen, cellar, our hall, and chamber, are all crowded full, besides others who are exposed to the weather and sheltered under the surrounding trees. Oh, I often wish that British Christians could, though but for once, witness the sights which I am constantly beholding! Could they but see the fervour of mind with which the people engage in their devotions, the eagerness with which they listen to the word of salvation, the spirit and life which they manifest in singing the praises of God, when the voices of the people from the surrounding buildings, the tent, and trees, and open yard, all intermingle with those in the chapel to form one universal burst of praise to God, they would not think any thing too much to contribute to such a cause."

Mr. E. Wood writes from St. Christopher's, in 1828:—
"There is a happiness unknown to many in labouring amongst such a people. If a minister's duties can be discharged more agreeably when he witnesses reverence to his office, love to his person, and unremitting attentions to secure his comfort, a West Indian missionary is highly favoured."

Mr. Vigis writes from St. Vincent's:—"On Saturday morning we left Barbadoes for St. Vincent's, where we arrived on Sunday morning—we made inquiry for the methodist chapel, and were soon shown the way to it. The chapel will contain upwards of twelve hundred persons, and it was crowded from end to end. When we got to the chapel great numbers of the poor blacks were running to us, expressing their happiness at seeing us. 'God bless you, massa,' resounded from every side, and such was the effect of their simple affection upon my feelings, that I was forced to give vent

to them in tears. I went into the chapel, and was rejoiced to hear the poor people tell of the goodness of God, the tears flowing down their sable cheeks while they spoke of the love of God in Christ. What I saw and felt on that day amply

compensated me for all the sacrifices I had made."

Of the slaves of Bermuda, Mr. Esten* gave the following account at the Bible Society anniversary, in 1825:—" If events should arise to give emancipation to the blacks, the slaves of Bermuda should be the first to receive it. They are enlightened, and in consequence of the institution of the Bible Society and others of a similar character, they are become religious; and the proprietors of slaves are becoming more and more sensible of the necessity of communicating religious instruction to them. One of the slaves, encouraged by his master, has a school of sixty or seventy, and the adults learn faster than the children; merely from a wish to read the bible, persons of fifty or sixty years of age have acquired the art of reading."

A more convincing proof of piety could hardly be given than the circumstance mentioned by a methodist missionary, who writes from Paget, in Bermuda:—"The holidays of Christmas were spent by the slaves of our society in erecting

a house for the worship of God."

Mr. Felvus, a methodist missionary, writes from Dominica, November 3, 1827, on the opening of the Wesleyan chapel at Layon:—" The slaves from the adjacent estates assembled in great numbers; and by the order preserved among them, their clean and neat appearance, and the evident attention they paid to the services of the day, they showed their minds were not void of religious impressions. Many of our people observed, it was the happiest day they ever spent in their lives. Notwithstanding the number that were together, the greatest quietness and harmony prevailed. One thing, however, affected me much, viz. the number of slaves who came around me when service was over, with tears in their eyes, and saying, 'God bless massa, you build this chapel for aw we; Lord of heaven bless you! bless you child, bless you wife.'"

At the anniversary of the Baptist Missionary Society, in 1824, Mr. Anderson, on moving the first resolution, said, "The West Indies exhibit scenes of peculiar interest. Sometime ago I received much information and satisfaction from conversing with a member of one of our churches there. That church consists of about three thousand members, who, though poor slaves, have been made free by the truth; and I was particularly pleased to find that they so

well understand pecuniary matters as connected with the obligations of religion. They build their own chapels, support their own poor, nourish their own sick, bury their own dead; and on more occasions than one when one of their members has been advertised for sale, to prevent his removal to a distance they have purchased him at an expense of £.90, or from that to £.120. Surely many of us

might learn a lesson from those poor negroes."

That the whites might take a lesson from some negroes with advantage, is the opinion likewise of the Rev. Wm. Chadderton, Rector of St. George's, Tortola, who expressed himself as follows, at the anniversary of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for Tortola and the Virgin Islands, June 3, 1824*:—" During the period above mentioned (more than three years), either as a friendly visitor, or in the capacity of a spiritual guide (when the missionaries have been absent), I have had frequent intercourse with the lay members of the Society, high and low, free and slaves; and I solemnly protest, that they seem to me to approach nearer the character of true Christians, as that character is drawn in the New Testament, than any others I have ever yet met with during my pilgrimage in this world. As extravagant as the relation may sound in the ears of some people, I am not ashamed to confess that I have often learned the sublimest lessons of practical religion from the poorest and most illiterate methodist negroes; and when witnessing the pure and exalted spiritual enjoyments of these simple, meek believers in Christ, I have oftentimes wished that I were not only almost, but altogether such as they; not even excepting the inconveniences of their temporal circumstances, if these might not be separated from those delightful religious experiences in which the true life and felicity of God's people consist, and in comparison with which all the pleasures and all the sufferings of this world are lighter than vanity." Mr. Chadderton's testimony is very valuable, as it appears from a preceding part of his speech that he was very much prejudiced against the methodists some years before. "There was a time," he says, "when such was my abhorrence of sectaries, that I should almost as soon have thought of abjuring the Christian faith, as to have entertained the idea of entering into the views or forwarding the plans of any society whose constitution and practice were in the slightest degree opposed to the order and discipline of the Church of England.

Mr. Felvus gives the following account of a visit to Tortola in 1828:—" By the time I got into the chapel,

brother M. was in his sermon. I rejoiced to see so many of my old friends at their posts in the house of the Lord, taking their usual active part in his worship; but I was affected to tears when many came and claimed me as their spiritual father. Among these were many of the recaptured Africans, who said to each other, 'Ah, massa Felvus, God a blessa massa Felvus, he do love de African?' I had, with my departed brother Truscott, formerly spent much time in affording them catechetical instruction, and urging them to the practice of morality, and endeavouring to convince them of the necessity of industry in order to become useful, comfortable, and respectable. I thank God our labour was not in vain. The major part are much more comfortable than we could have expected to see them. Some have got good houses of their own; and most that I saw looked well, with every indication of health and comfort; and some, I was credibly informed, had saved money. They are now all free. The difference in their appearance now, and when they were apprentices is certainly very great; so much so, that persons could hardly know them to be the same."

Many other proofs of the religious feelings and principles of the negroes, and of their attachment to their religious instructors might be given, but for fear of exhausting the reader's patience I will produce no more, but proceed to give a few instances of their gratitude towards their white benefactors, affection for each other, and general kindness

of feeling and conduct.

Mr. Bickell, who was well acquainted with their character and conduct, says*—" It frequently is said by the colonists and their friends, that if the present system were altered and the drivers deprived of their whips very little work would be done, as the negroes are so very idle that they would not labour unless through fear of punishment. conceive this to be a very erroneous idea, and particularly if they were allowed more time to cultivate their own grounds, and encouraged to attend the places of religious worship; they would then see that the whites took an interest in their comforts, and temporal and eternal welfare; gratitude would then impel the nerves and sinews of Africa's sons to do what the whip now scarcely obliges them to perform; they are not devoid of sense and feeling; and I can say from experience, that gratitude glows as fervently in the black men's bosoms as it does in those of the fair-skinned sons of Europe. I can affirm that the affections between the mothers and even spurious offsprings are very powerful, as well as

permanent, as I have known in many instances; and with respect to black children, nothing is so sure to irritate and enrage them as cursing their mothers; for when other quarrels would have ended in mere words, and the parties would have separated peaceably, I have seen them, great and small, of both sexes, set-to in great rage upon disrespectful or abusive language being spoken of their mammies, as they term them. I had a hired slave in Kingston, about fourteen years old, whose mother lived at Clarendon; and last year, when I thought of coming to England, some one had told the mother that I was going to take the son away with me; she could not rest till she obtained leave to come to Kingston (forty miles distant), to discover if it were true, and called upon me with much anxiety in her countenance, inquiring for her dear William, and begged massa would not take him away to England. I could with difficulty persuade her that I had no intention of doing it; and on inquiry was gratified to find, that the mother and boy were both averse to his quitting Jamaica without her, even though he could be emancipated by coming to this country. I was once on a coffee mountain on which were about seventy or eighty negroes; I was awakened, about an hour before daylight, by a great noise as of arms, with cries of women and children: a servant informed me that it was the marshal's deputies making a levy on the negroes; and that the noise proceeded from the clashing of weapons, for some of the slaves had resisted. By the time my friend and I arrived at the negro-houses the resistance had ceased, for the negroes had been overcome. Many of the men escaped from the property; and some few others with some women secreted themselves among the coffee trees, till the party had gone off with their prey. They secured however ten or twelve men, and most of the women and children, amounting in the whole to between thirty and forty, which were huddled together on the outside of the principal fence, and presented such a heart-rending scene as I never witnessed before, and should be very sorry ever to witness again. Some of the children had lost their mothers, and some of the mothers had been torn away from a part of their children; for some of the little urchins also escaped. One woman in particular had six or seven children, two or three of them were seized and the others escaped; but the youngest, an infant, had been caught, and she wept aloud and very bitterly for it; saying that she must give herself up if the child was not got back for she could not live separate from it. There was many a bitter ery and sad lament indeed among the women and children; for they loved their master, who was kind,

and had also excellent provision-grounds for them. They were driven off the same morning to Spanish Town gaol, a distance of twenty miles; but as they had been seized before sun-rise, and the fence had also been broken through (both of which are illegal), the owner obtained their liberty shortly after; and they were allowed to go back to the spot they loved. I might here remark that the labour is much lighter on a coffee mountain than a sugar estate; where therefore they have good provision-grounds, they are much more comfortable and less harassed than on a sugar estate."

A melancholy instance of the strength of parental love amongst the negroes is mentioned by Dr. Dickson* as having taken place in Barbadoes during his residence there. "A clever black girl, 13 or 14 years of age, the only child of her parents, having been maliciously and cruelly shipped off by a certain tyrant, her mother, a spirited African, who had been a person of rank in her own country, destroyed herself by poison, and left the husband and father in an

inconsolable condition."

The following anecdote+ is told by the Rev. Mr. Shrewsbury :- " A free young negro in Grenada, who had been apprenticed to a stone-mason, when he had served his apprenticeship, being very industrious, he laid by his earnings, and when he had obtained £.100, his first act was to purchase the freedom of his mother. He continued to lay by his money till he bought the freedom of one of his brothers; and when I left the Island he was about to pur. chase the liberation of another of them." If we compare the conduct of this young man with that of a deplorably large number of our own countrymen, of whom the parish records tell us: that of husbands who refuse to support their wives —fathers who refuse to support their children—children who refuse even to help their distressed parents-can we think that it is fitting that his race should continue under that subjection to ours, which they have so long endured?

Mr. Stewart[†] tells us that the following instance occurred in Jamaica during the Maroon war, and is well attested by several respectable gentlemen who were eyewitnesses to the transaction:—"During the ambuscade attack of the Maroons on Lieutenant-Colonel Sandford's party of dragoons and militia, at a narrow defile leading from the New to Old Trelawny Maroon Town, a gentleman's negro servant, being close to his master and observing a Maroon's piece levelled at him, he instantly threw himself between

^{*} Mitigation of Slavery, p. 440.

[†] At the Wesleyan Anniversary, in June 1825.

STEWART'S Past and Present State of Jamaica, p. 254.

him and the danger, and received the shot in his body. Happily it did not prove mortal, and the faithful slave lived to enjoy the well-earned fruits of his master's gratitude."

Mr. T. C. Morgan writes in his journal, "Stoney Hill, September 29:- A native of Yorkshire, who remembers Mr. Wesley preaching in his father's house, and who has lately joined our society, related to me the following account. A short time since he was reduced from a state of affluence to that of great distress; so much so, that in the time of sickness he was destitute of home, money, medicine, food, and friends. Just in this time of need an old negro man of our society offered his assistance, which being gladly accepted, this 'neighbour to him' bought medicine and administered it himself, furnished nourishment, sat up three nights, and, in short, acted the part of doctor, nurse, and host. Through the blessing of God the old negroe's efforts were rendered successful in the recovery of the sick man, who then inquired what expense he had been at, and promised remuneration as soon as possible. The generous old Christian replied, 'Massa, you no owe me nothing, me owe you much still.' 'How do you make that out?' said the restored man. 'Why, massa, me neber able to pay you, because you taught me to read the word of God.' "

Mr. Shrewsbury gives* an interesting instance of the attachment felt by the negroes, for their own country and countrymen. "More than forty African slaves, who were taken from a French slave ship, were brought to Tortola, and of those about thirty were put apprentice in the town; none of them speak any language but their own; but, providentially, there was in our society an old negro woman who came from the same part of Africa: she had been thirty years in the colony, and having preserved her native language, she set herself diligently to instruct these slaves in the truths of christianity. It pleased God to crown her efforts with success to more than twenty of them, who were afterwards joined to the society, and lived honest and useful and exemplary members of it till the day I left that Island."

Dr. Dickson speaks likewise with praise of their patriotism, a principle which glows in their bosoms with an ardour which does them honour. That man must be callous indeed who can remain an indifferent spectator of a meeting of two poor Africans, who may have been dragged from the same district of their dear native land. On such occasions,

^{*} At the annual meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, in 1825.

after all parties had got fairly on their centres, I have affected to inquire into the course of their emotion; and have generally been answered by another question, expressive of extreme astonishment that I should be ignorant

of it. "Kai! we no countérymen, massa?"

The following statement is made by Dr. Williamson*, a physician who lived fourteen years in Jamaica, and who is a warm friend of the West Indians:-" A melancholy instance that month presented itself of the fatality resulting from packed negro gangs, or those formed from Marshal's sales, and collected in small numbers from different places. I do not mean to blame the proprietor; for never could a master have rendered the duties of humanity more amply than he did; yet a depression of mind, accompanied by mal d'estomac, spread among them. Though wine, nourishment of every description, and kind attentions were given, they candidly confessed that death was their wish, and not to survive their companions. Negroes anticipate that they will upon death removing them from that country be restored to their native land, and enjoy their friends' society in a future state. The ill-disposed to their masters will sometimes be guilty of suicide; or by a resolute determination resort to dirt-eating, and thus produce disease and at length death. It is often necessary to check that spirit; and as negroes imagine that if decapitation be inflicted after death the transition to their native country cannot follow, a humane principle leads the proprietor to have the head of such a negro placed in some prominent situation; and such has been found a salutary mode of deterring the rest from conduct so destructive." There are probably not many readers who will believe that it is "ill-will to their masters" that makes these desponding negroes commit suicide; but if there be any such, the remainder of Dr. Williamson's statement will change their opinions; for if ill-will were their motive, they would not be prevented from destroying themselves by hearing that their heads would be cut off after they had done so.

A fact mentioned incidentally by Mr. M'Donald† (manager of an estate in Demerara), as well as by other writers, furnishes an additional confirmation of the affectionate disposition of the negroes. "If any woman is dangerously ill, one of her family is made to attend her, or a shipmate whom they always look upon as sisters, and call them so."

+ M'Donald's Considerations on Negro Slavery, p. 151.

^{*} Dr. Williamson's Medical and Miscellaneous Observations relative to the West India Islands. Vol. i., p. 92.

Mr. Stewart says, "Between Africans brought together from their own country in the same ship, a friendship is formed which usually continues to the end of their lives. 'Shipmate,' by which name they address each other, seems

synonymous in their view with brother or sister."

The following description of some sales of negroes is given by Dr. Pinckard*:--" A few days ago, I had the opportunity of being present at a market of slaves in Demerara. When purchased, the slaves were marked by placing a bit of string round their arms or necks. One gentleman was proceeding to distinguish those he had selected by tying a bit of red tape round the neck, when I observed two negroes who were standing together entwined in each others arms, watch him with great anxiety. Presently he approached them, and, after making his examination, affixed the mark only to one of them: the other, with a look of unerring expression, and with an impulse of marked disappointment, cast his eyes up to the purchaser, seeming to say-'And will you not have me too?'—then jumped and danced, and stamped with his feet, and made other signs to signify that he also was sound and strong, and worthy his choice. He was nevertheless passed by unregarded, upon which he turned again to his friend, brother, whichever he was, took him to his bosom, hung upon him, and in sorrowful countenance expressed the strongest marks of disappointment and affliction. The feeling was mutual: it arose from reciprocal affection. His friend participated in his grief, and they both wept bitterly. Soon afterwards, on looking round to complete his purchase, the planter again passed that way, and not finding any one that better suited his purpose, he now hung the token of choice round the neck of the negro whom he had before disregarded. All the powers of art could not have effected the change that followed. More genuine joy was never expressed. His countenance became enlivened, grief and sadness vanished, and flying into the arms of his friend he embraced him, then skipped and jumped and danced about, exhibiting all the purest signs of mirth and gratification. His companion, not less delighted, received him with reciprocal feelings, and a more pure and native sympathy was never exhibited. Happy in being again associated, they now retired apart from the crowd, and sat down in quiet contentment, kissing the red signal of bondage, like two attached and affectionate brothers, satisfied to toil out their days for an unknown master, so they might but

Dr. PINCKARD's Notes on the West Indies, Vol. ii., p. 220.

travel their journey of slavery together. In the afternoon of the same day I chanced to be present when another gentleman came to purchase some of the slaves who were not sold in the morning. After looking through the lot, he remarked that he did not see any who were of pleasant countenance, and going on to make further objections respecting their appearance, he was interrupted by the vendor, who remarked that at that moment they were seen to great disadvantage. as they looked worse, 'from having lost their friends and associates in the morning.' Since writing to you last*, I have been present at the sale of a Dutch cargo of slaves, at the new town of Amsterdam (in Berbice). A long table was placed in the middle of a large room: at one end was seated the auctioneer, at the other was placed a chair for the negro to stand upon, in order to be exposed to the view of the purchasers. In the course of the sale, a tall and robust negro approached the table, with a fine negress hanging upon his arm. The man was ordered to mount the chair. He obeyed, though manifestly with reluctance. His bosom heaved, and grief was in his eye. The woman remained in the crowd. The bidding commenced, but on the slave being desired to exhibit the activity of his limbs and to display his person, he sunk his chin upon his breast and hung down his head in positive refusal; then, looking at the woman, made signs expressive of great distress. Next he pointed to her, and then to the chair, evidently intimating that he desired to have her placed by his side, she was his chosen wife, and nature was correctly intelligible. Not obtaining immediate acquiescence he became agitated and impatient. The sale was interrupted, and, as he could not be prevailed upon to move a single muscle by way of exhibiting his person, the proceedings were at a stand. He looked again at the woman, again pointed to the chair, held up two fingers to the auctioneer, and implored the multitude in anxious suppliant gestures. Upon his countenance was marked the combined expression of sorrow, affection, and alarm. He grew more and more restless, and repeated signs which seemed to say, 'Let us be sold together.' Humanity could no longer resist the appeal, and it was universally agreed that they should make but one lot. A second chair was now brought, and the woman was placed at the side of her husband. His countenance instantly brightened: he hung upon the neck of his wife and embraced her with rapture; then, folding her in his arms and pressing her to his bosom, he became composed, and looked round with a smile of

^{*} Dr. PINCKARD'S Notes on the West Indies, Vol. ii., p. 325.

complacency. The bidding was renewed, and quickly the two were sold together*. I have again been present at a sale of human merchandize (in Demerara). Amidst a scene every way repugnant to humanity, I was pleased to remark that a general sympathy was excited towards one family, whose appeals to the compassion of the multitude were not less powerful than their claims. This family consisted of a mother, three daughters, and a son. The parent was still a well-looking woman; the children appeared to be from fourteen to twenty years of age: they were all of distinguished face and figure, and remarkably the handsomest negroes of the whole cargo. Their distress, lest they should be separated and sold to different masters, was so strongly depicted upon their countenances, and expressed in such lively and impressive appeals, that the whole crowd were impulsively led to commiserate their sufferings; and, by universal consent, they were removed from the three great lots+, and placed in a separate corner by themselves, in order that they might all be sold to the same master. Observing their extreme agitation, I was led particularly to notice their conduct as influenced by the terror of being torn from each other: the fears of the parent, lest she should be separated from her children or these from each other, were anxious and watchful beyond all that imagination could paint, or the most vivid fancy pourtray. When any one approached their little group, or chanced to look towards them with the attentive eye of a purchaser, the children in broken sobs crouched nearer together, and the tearful mother in agonizing impulse instantly fell down before the spectator, bowed herself to the earth, and kissed his feet; then, alternately clinging to his legs, and pressing her children to her bosom, she fixed herself upon her knees, clasped her hands together, and in anguish cast up a look of humble petition, which might have found its way to the heart of a Caligula; and thus in nature's truest language did the afflicted parent urge the strongest appeal to his compassion, while she implored the purchaser in dealing out to her the hard lot of slavery to spare her the additional pang of being torn from her children."

The following account is taken from one of the publications of the American Colonization Society: -- "Some time

Missionary Register, July 1825, p. 315.

^{*} Dr. PINCKARD's Notes on the West Indies, Vol. iii., p. 355.

[†] These blacks were not sold in the same manner as at the Dutch sale at Berbice, but were divided into three great lots according to their value, and the price being fixed, the purchasers were left to select from whichever division they might prefer.

since a vessel came into Baltimore under circumstances which excited suspicion that negroes were unlawfully detained on board. Inquiry was immediately set on foot; and the navy agent was directed by the President of the States to have the officers examined. The Board thus state the result: "The question was put to them severally, whether they wished to remain in this country as freemen, or to be sent to Mesurado, and thence if practicable to their homes. Dowrey was the first who was called to answer; he was a chief in his own country. He replied, 'I wish to go home; I wish to see my father, my wife, and children; I have been at Mesurado; I live but three days' walk from that place.' Barteron answered, 'Let me go home; I have a wife, I have two children; I live a morning's walk from Dowrey.' The next person called was Mousah, the son of a highly respectable chief; he had been living with General Harper, and when asked if he was not disposed to remain and be instructed, and go home hereafter and teach his countrymen, he replied, 'General Harper is a good man; he will give me clothes and food, and be kind to me; but he cannot give me my wife and children.' When the question was put to Cubangerie, he replied, 'Why do you ask this question over and over? I am so rejoiced at the thoughts of returning that I want words to express myself. Do you not know that nothing is so dear as a man's home?' Mazzey said, 'My mother is living; my father is living; I have two sisters; I shall be grateful to those who send me to my family and friends.' The answer of Fanghah was, 'I shall be joyful to go home; I have a father, mother, wife, sister, and three children, to meet me in my own country.' Corree said, that 'all he desired was, to be landed in Africa and he should soon find his way home.' Banhah made nearly the same reply.

"After these eight persons were examined, they expressed great anxiety to be joined by two of their companions not present. These had been placed with a man who, it seems, was not willing to part with them, and had reported that they wished to remain. This proved a false pretence, set up with a view to profit by the labour of the negroes: they were released from thraldom, and brought to the place of examination. When they arrived, their companions sprang with extacies to meet them—embraced them again and again—caught them in their arms—raised them from the ground—and continued for half an hour at intervals to embrace and shake them by the hand. Nothing could exceed their joy at being told that they were free, and would sail in a

day or two for Africa."

A profusion of deeply interesting statements might be given in proof of the amiable natural character of the negro, from the accounts sent from Sierra Leone by the clergymen, missionaries, and visitors in that colony: so many beautiful anecdotes press for admittance, that it is very difficult to confine this part of the work within the necessary limits.

The following account of the arrival and reception of a fresh body of negroes is given by the Rev. W. A. Johnson, who was sent to Sierra Leone by the Church Missionary Society*:—"I received a letter from Joseph Reffells, Esq. chief superintendant of captured negroes, in which I was informed, that a slave-vessel had been brought in with two hundred and thirty-eight of our unfortunate fellow creatures; and that he and the Governor had agreed to send them all to Regent's Town, and begged me therefore to go down to Free Town and receive them. I went with some of my people to Free Town. Those who remained at home prepared food for their poor country people. Of these people, two hundred and seventeen were delivered to me: the rest, being sick, were carried to the Leicester Mountain, to the Hospital. I cannot describe the scene which occurred when we arrived at Regent's Town. I have seen many landed, but never beheld such an affecting sight as I now witnessed. As soon as we came in view, all the people ran out of their houses towards the road to meet us with loud acclamations. When they beheld the new people, weak and faint, they caught hold of them, carried them on their backs, and led them up towards my house. As they lay there exhausted on the ground, many of our people recognised their friends and relatives; and there was a general cry of 'O, massa! my sister!'- 'My brother!'- 'My countryman! he live in the same town?' &c. The poor creatures, who were very faint, having just come out of the hold of a slave-vessel, did not know what had befallen them; nor whether they should laugh or cry when they beheld the countenances of those whom they had supposed to have been long dead; and whom they now saw clothed, clean, and perhaps with healthy children in their arms. In short, I cannot do justice to the scene—it was beyond description. None of us could refrain from shedding tears, and lifting up our hearts in prayer and praise to the wonder-working God, whose ways are in the deep.

The school boys and girls brought the victuals which they had prepared; and all the people, following their example,

^{*} The accounts from Sierra Leone are taken from the Missionary Register.

ran to their houses, and brought what they had got ready; and in a short time their unfortunate country-people were overpowered with messes of every description; and made such a dinner as they had not been accustomed to for a long time."

Mr. During gives the following account of the arrival and reception of a fresh body of negroes, in May 1821:-" It was past four o'clock in the afternoon when I received them; and when I had got them all out of Free Town, on their way to Gloucester, I reviewed them, and soon found that I had not brought men enough with me to help these poor afflicted people up the hill—happily for me and the poor people, a man, while they were passing after liberation through the court of the mixed commission, had run up to Gloucester to fetch more people, to carry the sick home. Ignorant of what the man had done, I went on slowly with them, almost despairing of getting them up; but I had not gone far from the foot of the hill before I was met by great numbers, who as they came up took upon their backs those who were unable to walk; and when I was half way up, I saw almost the whole of them carried by those whom we had met with on the road. When we reached home, I ordered victuals to be prepared for the new people; but before this could be done food came in from every quarter. The women, and part of our school girls who had cooked it, did not stop to ask, 'Who is of my country?' but the men and women who were nearest to them were refreshed. The day being quite gone, and it being Saturday besides, I quartered the men and boys in the church for that and the following night. On Monday I distributed them among the people in their houses, where they would be taken best care of. The people were quite eager and impatient to receive them, and make them comfortable in their houses. Among the rest was a woman, one of the communicants, who took one of the newly-arrived women under her care. She was asked by Mrs. During what she wanted to do with the new woman. She said, 'Ma'am, that now almost two years since me come this country. My country woman take me: she do me good: she tell me of the Lord Jesus Christ-and that same they do to me that time, me want to do same to this woman." Some time afterwards, Mr. During adds, "This spirit of humanity toward the unfortunate has not subsided: it is still the same. At first the new comers are generally subject to much sickness, which is the case at present; but the evidences which I have daily of the care for them everywhere makes my heart rejoice, because they show the powerful effect of the gospel, even upon the hearts of the rudest barbarian of this continent. But this is not all. The anxiety for temporal welfare is, with many, connected with spiritual also: before I was sufficiently enabled to clothe the new people, I saw them brought to church, morning and evening, clad in the clothes of our old inhabitants."

Extracts from Mr. Johnson's communications and quarterly reports of the state and progress of the settlement at

Regent's Town, in 1822 and 1823:-

"The afflicting separation of Mrs. Johnson from us has been a trial severely felt. The people among whom I reside have much endeavoured to make my burden easy; they have not only in an affectionate manner sympathized with me in my afflictions, but comforted me with many simple but striking expressions. Their behaviour has in general been peaceable, and they have been willing to serve me whenever an opportunity has offered itself. When I express a wish that anything should be done, they will without gainsaying do it immediately; all these and other circumstances have formed an attachment between me and the people of my charge which is better imagined than expressed. May 4, 1822.—I took leave this morning of my dear wife. When I came home, the people looked at me with tears in their eyes; it appeared as though they wished to speak to me, but were too full of sorrow to say anything. One man came at last and said, that he could not help weeping when he saw me. 'Mammy,' he observed, 'has been with us six years, and she stands the same like our mother. God take her away, and who knows how soon God may take you away! and what will then become of us at Regent's Town. Again, I think about mammy's sickness; my heart feel I never see any person suffer so; and when she go, she say she shall never see us again until we meet at the righthand of God: them words go through my heart:' he wept much, and wounded my heart afresh. One woman wept, and asked, why I had not told them that Mrs. Johnson was going to England; she had not known it, and therefore had not bid her good-bye. I told her, that I had not known it myself until the day before. She continued, 'Me was young when mammy came here, and she stand like my mother, and I no bid her good-bye.' Sunday, after prayer-meeting in the morning, several people came as before, and with sympathizing affection pitied my affliction. One woman leaned her head against the staircase, and gave free vent to her feelings; after she had a little composed herself, she came to my room and said, 'Oh massa! I am so sorry that mammy go so quiet; I no say good-bye to her, which make me so troubled; two words mammy talked to me I never

forget.' She was again overcome, and went away weeping. After service some other women came, and expressed their sorrow at not having bid Mrs. Johnson farewell. One said, 'that time mammy go, I think she go to bid Mr. During good-bye; suppose we know that mammy go and not come again, no men should have carried her; but we women would have carried her to Free Town; I am sorry mammy so sick; poor thing! she suffer so much, and that for we; suppose she no come to this country she no sick so; may the Lord Jesus Christ help her!' Another said, 'mammy say when she go, that she no see we again in this world, but hope to meeet we at the right hand of the Lord Jesus Christ at the day of judgment; them words make me sorry very much.' May 6:—I received this morning the following note from an African who does not reside in this place:—'My dear Sir, I was sorry and disappointed. I came yesterday to hear you preach, as I have had no opportunity of hearing you for some time. Believe me, my dear Sir, let me go where I will, my heart can never let me think any other Church like Regent's Church. When I hear you speak I think all you say is directed to me. When I saw you yesterday morning I could not help weeping, only I hid it from you as much as I could; but in particular when I saw Mrs. Johnson's chair, I could not help crying, and I pitied your case. But, Sir, all things work for good to them that love God. This is a cross for you, and a great one to bear; you have given up your wife for the Cross of Christ.'

"A considerable number of my flock came and participated in my affliction. Some said, that as God had taken away Mrs. Johnson, he would perhaps take me away: their hearts seemed so full that they scarcely could express their feelings. One said, it was just as if somebody had died: the whole place was in awful silence, and every body appeared to mourn."

Mr. During was obliged, on account of illness, to return for a time to England. On the 18th of January, 1823, he landed at Freetown, on his return to Sierra Leone. He gives the following account of his reception by his people:—"I wished to go on shore unnoticed, but this I found impossible, as some of my dear flock had recognised me while yet on board. Oh, what were my feelings, when at a distance at which a musket-ball could not have reached me from the shore, I heard them exclaim—'That's our massa!—that's Mr. During!—yes, that's he!—thank God!' They had watched my arrival every day since the beginning of the month, and this was the eighteenth day; for they had intelligence of our being in the Gambia. On reaching the shore, they literally pulled me out of the boat; and some

hung so about me that I could not stir; others cried for joy; others called out 'you want to kill massa to-day;' and others exclaimed, 'thank God, he send our massa home again.' It was about eleven o'clock in the morning when I landed, and this tumult continued till three in the afternoon. It is impossible to describe the acclamations of joy which they expressed in every possible way. Saturday is their chief market day, and always the fullest about this time. The news soon reached the market, and found its way into the mountains about half an hour after. I had got as far as Mr. Flood's house, where I could scarcely speak to any one; but was obliged to go into the piazza, to show myself and salute every one there, which I believe was almost half Gloucester. When I went on board all followed me to the shore; the women in particular all wanted to go on board to fetch mammy, as they call our wives; 'for,' said they, 'we are hungry to see mammy again and the pickaninnies, do massa take us with you!' but this was

impossible.

"As soon as I returned, in the twinkling of an eye I had lost both my wife and children among them. I was much afraid that they would keep the children too long in the sun, but they had carried them straight to Mr. Flood's house. There I found them, fully employed with Mrs. During and the children, which gave me time to rest a little. After four o'clock the people began to press me very hard to go home before dark; 'for,' said they, 'Gloucester Town all cry for you very much; yes, massa, we want you there very much; we hungry to see you there again. When we had proceeded a few hundred yards a gun was fired close before my horse; I begged them to desist, at least till they were out of Freetown; but as soon as we were out of it they began quite in style. This is a token of the greatest respect and honour that they can show to their superiors, in their own countries. They kept up this firing till we came in sight of Gloucester, when it ceased; and instead, they began singing 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.' When we came into the town, they wanted to carry me up to my house, which I protested against in the strongest terms. What I have felt this day it is impossible to describe. 'Thank God, massa come again, was heard from all quarters- we no have trouble too much all this time you go to England,' said one of them, 'but we are glad too much to see you here again. That time you go all people cry for you too much; this time you come back all people laugh. Plenty people live here, they sick, they no have foot to walk; but to-day all get strong to run Freetown.' Another said, 'massa, all that time you go to England all we people stand like chickens when their hen die or leave them; and then they all run about and cry; but when they find their mammy again they are glad and quiet.' When we had been ten minutes or a quarter of an hour in the house, they began to ring the bell for prayers. We went into church, which I found full. The sight affected me so much that it was with the greatest difficulty that I could utter a word."

Mr. During writes on the 11th of June, when suffering from illness:-"But while I have hinted at my personal affliction, I must not forget the conduct of our people, as it will throw further light on their progress. During the whole time of my sickness, which all knew was of a serious nature, the whole under my care were particularly distressed about it; and all the communicants of Regent's both sympathized with those here and felt for me; and their joint prayers and supplications for me were almost incessant. When my disease had come to a crisis, I was seized with agonizing pain and palpitation of the heart. This was very soon known; and in a little time the bed room and piazza were filled chiefly with the communicants, all viewing me as certainly dying. No distressful howling noise, as practised by their brethren in their natural state, was heard; but silent tears were seen running down their cheeks in great abundance, while the more hardy vented their grief in sighs and groans: the sight was too much for me. I desired them to remove, at least so far that I could not see them. One man, who seemed to have been thinking of what I had said, came close to the bed, and said very feelingly, 'massa, dont drive us away. We come to see what we can do for you; suppose you tell us to fetch doctor from town, we can go and carry him up quick suppose he no have horse to ride.' Another event also brought great comfort and satisfaction to my mind during my illness; this was the remarkably good behaviour of the people, both here and at Regent's. Never, I am fully authorised to say, did practical religion shine more brightly among our people than in the last two months; nor did they sympathize with me only, but equally with other suffering servants of the society; nor did they stop here, but every respectable European who fell a victim to the yellow fever was lamented by them, and I have heard them pray for those whom they knew to be ill with equal simplicity and earnestness."

Mr. During observes, at another time—" Most of those with whom I live I have seen brought from the holds of slave-ships; I have seen them rise from the chains of the slave-dealer to become industrious men and women, faithful

subjects, pious christians, affectionate husbands and wives, tender fathers and mothers, and peaceable neighbours."

Captain Sabine's testimony* to the condition of the negroes when he visited Sierra Leone is still more striking:—"I have been a considerable traveller, and have seen society under all circumstances; but I can declare most conscientiously, that I never saw human society under so favourable and delightful a form as in the Church Missionary settlements

on the coast of Africa."

Extract from the Report of Mrs. Kilham, of her second visit to Africa in 1827 and 1828 :- " The Africans in the colony of Sierra Leone are acknowledged to be a docile affectionate people, and easily governed. The good feeling which subsists between T. Macfoy+ and the people under his care is truly pleasant to witness. Their conduct on one memorable occasion is worthy to be recorded, as a striking proof of their affectionate, courageous, and truly generous feeling in a moment of extreme danger. The store near to T. Macfoy's house had taken fire; it contained among other things a barrel of gunpowder, which had been got for blowing up rocks in making the new roads; T. M., in his first alarm, called on the people to escape for their lives, but they promptly replied, 'No, no, we must fight that powder,' and rushing by the flames, they with a quick and laborious effort disengaged the barrel, and brought it out. While T. M. was attending to the extinction of the flames, some of the people, from the fears that the house might yet take fire, took away his wife and children to convey them to a place of safety: Mrs. Macfoy had but lately been confined to her room, and wept in anxiety and distress as they brought her away; they tried to comfort her, saying, 'Dont cry, mammy—your children shall not be lost—your house shall not burn.' T. M. returned to his house, and found it stripped of his family and furniture, and knew not where they were gone: in going out into the road, he saw there the furniture spread out in a line, and men regularly placed along to guard it: on the furniture being brought back, it appeared there was not anything lost, and only a single glass tumbler broken. T. Macfoy was affected with the conduct of the people, and speaking to them of what he felt toward them, and his wish that he could return their kindness, they quickly replied, 'That they wanted no return but that which they now enjoyed."

+ Superintendent of Wellington.

^{*} Quoted by Mr. Cunningham at the meeting of the Church Missionary Society, in 1823.

Mr. Harvey, who spent a considerable time at Cape François, in Hayti, during the reign of Christophe, speaks with great gratitude of the kindness he received from his negro servant there*:-" During a severe attack of the fever which confined me to my bed for some time, when a negro servant had the charge of my rooms, and a negro surgeon was one of my medical attendants, not a single article of any kind was stolen. Had they been disposed to pilfer, they had the most favourable opportunity for doing so, with little probability of detection. But on my recovery, I found every thing in the same state in which I had left it at the beginning of my illness; insomuch that nothing was wanting, nor even misplaced: nor can I omit this opportunity of recording the honesty of a negro servant, who remained with me during that long and dangerous illness. To this gloomy period my mind often reverts with a kind of melancholy pleasure. At a distance from those friends whose sympathies in the hour of sickness are so consolatory a stranger among strangers—at a period when the fever was carrying off one or more of the few white residents dailyoften suffering excruciating pain and reduced to the lowest state of debility-when all hope of recovery had vanished and my medical adviser hourly expected my death-how valuable were the unremitting attentions, the unceasing kindness, and the sincere sympathies of a negro attendant! How valuable, I trust I shall never be so ungrateful as to forget."

The following remarks on the disposition and habits of the negro slaves are made by Mr. Walter, a West Indian proprietor, who had the direction of the late crown estates in Berbice, under the commissioners for crown property†:—
"There are no people more capable of being fairly reasoned with; none can be made more sensible of right and wrong. A system of improved treatment, when regularly established and impartially persevered in, commands the respect, obedience, and attachment of a gang of negroes beyond what can be believed by persons who have never

tried the experiment.

A certain peaceableness of disposition manifests itself in both races (the negro and the asiatic). The mildness of the African is accompanied with a certain mixture both of frankness and firmness in his character. I mean not to be the professed eulogist of the negro race, though I must say,

^{*} Sketches of Hayti, p. 322.

[†] Letters on the West Indies, p. 79. ‡ Idem, p. 207.

that if any class of men have often been found mild yet not deceitful—if often firm and faithful, there is a something in those qualities which pleads for liberal treatment. In one point the two races I have compared seem to agree-a willingness to be subject to Europeans as long as they are well used by them. This disposition to tame submission and dependence seems to arise partly from natural indolence-paucity of wants-love of ease-and partly from the habit in which all in the present generation and their fathers have spent their lives, of seeing and feeling our superiority in arms, in arts, in science*. I repeat, that in my humble opinion the negroes are, generally speaking, quite willing to submit to our government, if we will only exercise it in moderation and gentleness. I conceive that it is by mistake that we think of our slaves as of ourselves; and imagine that their hearts are ever burning with thoughts about dependence or independence—thoughts by which, on the contrary, I believe their bosoms would seldom be visited, if we would only do our parts to make them the abodes of contentment and happiness. We may indeed goad men to rebellion by severity. Indeed I think it is a wonder we have not oftener produced such an effect on our slaves by those fits of harshness which generally and very unnecessarily accompany our fits of terror. Not seldom has the negro been called to show his patience in the midst of additional endurance, hoping that 'master' will return to more quiet in his own mind, and more reasonableness towards him. It is no wonder that some violent and cruel men are at times troubled with both waking and sleeping dreams of tumult and horror. But that the fiery spirit of re-action, of which they are so much afraid, and which they do so much first to create and then to stir, is really a very dormant principle: we have had more and more proof every day since the abolition of the slave trade: we have only to use the wisdom and discretion of permitting and encouraging it to lie dormant. West Indians often show a good deal of inconsistency in this matter. Very generally they pay a sort of unconscious but striking compliment to the good nature and fidelity of their negroes. Seldom does a white man on a plantation lock his door at night: I don't recollect ever sleeping anywhere in the West Indies where I observed any very particular attention paid to a precaution so necessary in Europe."

Colonel Malenfant, a slave proprietor of St. Domingo, speaks well of the character of the slaves there in many

particulars. He says *- "The field negroes are generally mild, humane, generous, hospitable; good fathers, good husbands, good sons; respectful to the old, submissive to their masters and to their fathers; and industrious, whatever may be said to the contrary. In 1789 I was walking with a rich proprietor who managed his plantation himself+. At breakfast-time he went away from the people, and said to me, 'I am very much distressed: my provision grounds have not produced as much as I expected: my negroes have nothing to eat. I will go away, because during my absence they will take sugar-cane for their breakfast.' When the negroes saw what their master was doing, and the uneasiness he suffered, they began to sing, 'If the potatoes do not come it is because the good God would not have them come: if we had had a great crop it would have been because the good God would have it so.' I have seen very religious negroes, and I have often made use of the influence of religion to obtain from my negroes what perhaps I could not otherwise have persuaded them to dot. I have seen an old negro who had instilled religious principles into his children: one of them had behaved rather disrespectfully to his father, who took a stick and beat him, reprimanding him severely also. The son, a young man of twenty, lying on the ground, received the beating and the reprimand, without uttering a word except excuses, and begging his father's forgiveness. During the heat of the insurrection the negroes respected the priests, and the white men hung them. On New Year's Day the negroes on the plantation under my care brought me gifts of fowls, eggs, fruit, &c. §. At first I refused them, saying that they were not rich enough to make me such presents; they all answered, 'We give you these things because you are a good white, and behave well to the negroes; our hearts give you them as well as our hands.' And when I offered to pay them double the value of the things, they said, 'We will not have your money, keep it; if we wished to sell our fowls we would take them to market at Portau-Prince.' "

I shall next give some statements, which show that the slaves are not deficient in industry when they happen to be placed in circumstances which enable them to benefit by their exertions.

Extract from a letter from Mr. M. Rae, manager of Plantation Endeavour, in Demerara:—" March 4, 1824.

^{*} MALENFANT, des Colonies, &c. p. 195. † Idem, p. 228.

[†] Idem, p. 204. § Idem, p. 289.

Having had an opportunity of introducing a system on this estate which, in my opinion, has added both to the comfort and happiness of the negroes under my charge, I hope it will not be deemed presumptuous in me here to state the nature of that system. About twelve months ago I adopted a plan of tasking the field labourers in all sorts of work; this I was induced to do from two considerations; first, because by the old system there was no inducement in the shape of reward held out to the labourers to make them exert themselves to finish a day's labour; and secondly, on account of the constant harassing duty that was required of the persons having the charge of the slaves employed in the field*. By the system of tasking, the negroes know what they have got to do for the day, as soon as they muster for work in the morning; and there is a strong inducement and reward held out to them in knowing that when their task is finished the rest of the day is their own: it is also attended with a very great relief to those having the superintendence of the fieldwork; as there is no necessity for harassing or pushing on the negroes with their work, as the people themselves are generally very anxious to finish their task; and the only attention that is consequently required from an overseer or driver is to take care that the work be well done. Having carried on this tasking system for about three months, and finding the negroes highly satisfied with it, on account of its contributing so much to their comfort and happiness by enabling them to devote so much time to their own purposes, and finding also that a whip was never required by a driver in the field; I was induced to order the drivers to discontinue carrying their whips to the field altogether, and to reserve to myself the sole power to inflict punishments for all offences. It is now nine months since this last system was adopted; and I am happy in being able to add that it has contributed greatly to the general contentment and good behaviour of the negroes, as well as to the interest of the owner, by whom I believe it is felt and acknowledged."

Mr. Alleyne, manager of the Plantation Liguan, in Demerara, gives a similar statement :—" Liguan, March 15, 1824:—It may not be irrelevant here to mention, that since the month of May last I have given up the practice of allowing drivers to carry whips into the fields, and hitherto have found the plan succeed to my satisfaction. By adopting task-work instead of continued labour, the negroes generally do as much as formerly, and in less time; many finishing

^{*} Considerations on Negro Slavery, by A. M'Donnell, Esq. p. 163. † Idem, p. 167.

their day's work by three or four o'clock, there being but

few instances in which compulsion was necessary."

Extract from a letter from the Rev. Nathaniel Gilbert, the proprietor of Gilbert's, in Antigua, given in the Report of the Slave Conversion Society for 1824:- "For many months I have been without either manager or overseer; the whole of the superintendence being left to a few of the most steady and exemplary negroes. They seem duly to appreciate the confidence thus reposed in them, and perform their daily tasks with an alacrity and integrity formerly altogether unknown. My crops, both of provision and of sugar, have in consequence nearly doubled: the last exceeded that of any other estate in the island, and the present will probably do the same. This system I have been gradually introducing since my return to this country; and every fresh step has been followed by increasing success. have no hesitation whatever in ascribing these practical results to the improved moral and religious condition of the negroes. Those who were formerly notorious thieves and vagabonds are now industrious and honest: and I could produce several instances, even from among those who had grown old in vice, of the most indolent becoming diligent

and trustworthy."

The prevalence of a custom mentioned by Dr. Dickson and by Mr. Cooper tends to show, that the slaves are able to manage their own affairs without the preparatory discipline which is by many thought necessary to enable them to do so. Dr. Dickson, in speaking of a family of slaves in Barbadoes, one of whom was a native African, says:-" The mother was a washerwoman in Bridgetown, and I occasionally employed the father as a porter, and the daughter to go on little errands. They were very obliging, honest people; and the man was one of the quietest and most inoffensive man I ever knew, black or white. They 'worked out' as it is called; that is, found employment for themselves, and gave their owner a certain proportion of their earnings. This is an illegal practice, but it is very general notwithstanding." Mr. Cooper says, "Some few individuals, who have a negro or two whom they do not want to employ themselves, allow them to go out to work on their own account; with an understanding that they are to bring home to their owner on a Saturday night about ten or twelve shillings currency. This plan is much approved of by the slaves; and it obviously answers the purpose of the master. He gets his profit without any trouble, and the slave is in a manner free, by being left to choose his own work and the time for doing it, provided he makes his payments good with his master. I

knew a brown man who was allowed to act on this plan; and he was so much superior to the other slaves in his appearance, that for some time I took him to be a person of free condition."

We see from the statements last given, that when any step is taken which in some degree assimilates the condition of the slave to that of the free man, whether it be that of paying them for their labour—that of treating them with the same kind of confidence that is placed in free labourers or that of only requiring them to bring to their masters a fixed sum which they may acquire in any way they choose -good consequences result from the measure. The beneficial effect of elevating the condition of the slave is also proved by the state of things in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of South America, where the manner of employing the slaves which has long prevailed, places them nearly in the circumstances of free labourers: and this custom (joined with the very important one of encouraging manumission) has placed the slaves there in a situation far more advantageous to themselves and to their masters than that in which they are in our colonies. From various circumstances there has arisen in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies* "a much better system of treatment than any other European colony can boast of. The first consequence of this state of things has been the constant security of these settlements from all risks of negro rebellion. Other views of interest have conspired to confirm and extend this system of mildness and equity towards the slaves; and the legislature has not failed, by every prudent interference, to assist the inferior race in the acquisition of rights and privileges.

"Thus we meet with many very singular analogies between the history of the negroes in South America, and that of the villains or bondsmen of Europe in the earlier feudal times. All the gold and jewels in Brazil have for many years been collected according to the same plan that the feudal lords adopted for the purpose of quickening the industry of their vassals. The master supplies the slave daily with a certain quantity of provisions and tools; and the slave is obliged to return a certain quantity of gold or jewels, according to the nature of the ground. Every thing that remains over this ration, the negro keeps to himself. The gold mines of Popayan and Choeo, in Spanish America, are wrought in the very same way. The finest pearl fisheries in South America, those of Panama for example, are in the hands of negro tenants as it were. These are bound to give a certain num-

BROUGHAM's Colonial Policy, Vol. ii., p. 512, 1803.

ber of pearls every week. The negroes in the towns are allowed to hire themselves out to services of different kinds, on condition of returning to their masters a certain portion of their wages; the rest they may spend, or hoard up for their own use.

"After a slave has, in any of these various ways, acquired property, he endeavours to purchase his freedom. If the master is exorbitant in his demands, he may apply to a magistrate, who appoints sworn appraisers to fix the price at which the slave shall be allowed to buy his freedom. Even during his slavery the behaviour of the master towards him is strictly watched: he may complain to the magistrate and obtain redress, which generally consists in a decree obliging the master to sell him at a certain rate. The consequences of all these laws and customs are extremely beneficial to the Spanish and Portuguese power in America. While the slaves are faithful and laborious, the free negroes are numerous: * * most of the artificers are of this class; and some of the best troops of the New World are composed entirely of negroes, who by their own labour and frugality

have acquired their liberty."

The following extract from Mr. Bickell's work shows the industrious habits of the slaves in Jamaica, though written for a different purpose:-" By those unacquainted with colonial affairs I may be thought to exaggerate, when I speak of negroes travelling fifteen or twenty miles, loaded like mules, to a market. It is however a real fact, particularly in the parishes near Kingston, as the slaves get a more ready sale for their provisions there than they could in the country markets. Many of them go a part of the way on Saturday evenings, and others travel nearly all night, to be in good time on the Sunday mornings. I myself met a great many men, women, and children, last year on different Saturday evenings, at the distance of from five to fifteen miles from Kingston, proceeding there with heavy loads; and on many a Sunday morning only a few months since, in the space of two or three miles on the same road, I have not met less than three or four hundred, leaded like so many beasts of burden. Some come from St. Thomas's in the East, a distance of thirty miles; so that these have sixty miles to walk from Saturday afternoon to Sunday evening."

The returns from Honduras prove the industry of the negroes in that small colony very satisfactorily:—"The slaves there, besides being supplied with provisions, are allowed the use of land, and time to cultivate it. Two days in the

week, Saturday and Sunday, are wholly given up to them; during which they may employ themselves in any way they may deem most advantageous, not being debarred from any of the ordinary sources of profit enjoyed by the whites. They may hire themselves to their own master or to any one else who will employ them; or they may cultivate the ground for their own use or for purposes of sale, or they may rear stock. The extraordinary effect produced by the possession, exclusively for their own purposes, of that single day, will be understood when we look at the prices which, through the industrious employment of it, the slaves of Honduras have been able to give for their freedom. One man is stated to have paid £.225 for his freedom, another £.250, and another £.300. One man continuing a slave himself, buys his wife's freedom for £.100, and another that of a son at the same price*. Several women pay for themselves £.100 each, and one as much as £.200‡. These prices however, high as they are, are brought within the reach of the slaves, simply in consequence of the scope afforded to their industry by giving them a day in the week besides Sunday. The time allowed even to them, it must be admitted, is scanty enough. Five days of the week are given wholly to the master, and only one to themselves, besides Sunday; and yet other difficulties and discouragements being removed (no tax is imposed on manumission in Honduras) hope is awakened; and under its influence such is the industry and the providence they exercise, that they are enabled to effect these great accumulations. Under this better system, manumissions have proceeded with twentyeight times the rapidity at Honduras that they have in Demerara; and no one has alleged that this comparative rapidity has ever endangered the peace, or marred the prosperity, or aggravated the demoralization of the colony of Hondurast."

The assembly of Grenada, in the evidence they transmitted to the Privy Council, state that—"Though the negroes were allowed the afternoon of only one day in every week, they would do as much work in that afternoon when em-

^{*} It would not be easy to find amongst white people a parallel for the affectionate generosity which led these slaves to purchase the freedom of their relations in preference to their own; yet we do really think ourselves so much superior to such men as these, as to be entitled to consider them as our chattels and to treat them as beasts of the field!

[†] The above sums are in Honduras currency, the proportion of which to sterling is either about £.150 per cent. as in Jamaica, or £.200 per cent. as in the other Islands, probably the former.

[#] Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter, for August, 1827.

ployed for their own benefit, as in the whole day when employed in their master's service*." Mr. Steele's experiment, before referred to, corresponds with this statement; he found that eighteen negroes working in the common manner, did not do as much in a given time as six had performed of the like sort of work a few days before, when working by piece-work for their own advantage.

CHAPTER IV.

On the Conduct and Circumstances of Emancipated Negroes.

I AM next to inquire what has actually been the conduct of slaves who have been emancipated in various manners, and under various circumstances.

I shall begin by inquiring into the situation and character of those who have purchased their own freedom, or have

had it purchased for them by their friends.

Mr. Bickell gives a very favourable report of the free blacks in Jamaica, as to industry, moral and religious character, and success in life. He says: *-" I am well aware it has been asserted that nothing but coercion can induce a negro to labour more than barely to raise enough for his subsistence—this is extremely erroneous; witness the great number of free blacks in the towns of Jamaica; in Kingston they are most of them good mechanics, and work as regularly and as hard as white men in this country. They also conduct themselves as well, can read and write many of them, and are more respectably clad than white men of the same class in England. In Port-Royal just the same; they are industrious and intelligent, and several of them have more, much more religion than the low white men there who affect to despise them. There is a large charity school for the poor white children (both boys and girls) in Kingston, and a considerable number of them are boarded and clothed; a few brown boys are also admitted there to be taught only, but in general there is no provision for the education of the free coloured and free black children, more than what the parents can afford them-

* West Indies as they are, p. 16.

[•] See this account quoted by Mr. Pitt, in his speech on the Slave Trade, in 1791.

selves; they are however very anxious to get their children educated; and in Kingston, Spanish-Town, Port-Royal, and other towns, most of the free children can read and write. In the city and parish of Kingston there is but one church; it is thronged every Sunday morning, principally by free people of colour and free blacks: a chapel of ease has never been built; on this account, seeing so good an opening, the dissenters have been very active, and have four or five places of worship. The means by which some of these chapels were built redound very much to the credit of the free people of colour, free blacks, and slaves, of Kingston*; for I was credibly informed, that it was principally through the donations and subscriptions of those too much despised classes, that two of these buildings (but more particularly the largest Wesleyan chapel) were raised. This last is a very handsome building, and spacious enough to contain 1200 or 1400 persons. The builders were a brown man and a black man; and the cost about £.8,500 sterling. Many free negroes subscribed liberally, and a considerable number of the slaves contributed their mite. A considerable number of the brown men have a high and proper sense of religion, and are still attached to the established mode of worship. Some months before I left, a body of them requested the rector to open the church for divine service some evening in the middle of the week; he did so, and has a large congregation of free people and slaves, the former of whom pay the expense of lighting it up. I cannot here refrain from stating an offer that was made by a free black man towards building another church or chapel of ease. negro of the name of Hardy, who is a mason, and who had built the Scotch Kirk in Kingston, was conversing with the rector and myself about that building, and its being converted into a chapel of ease, as the minister of it had died about that time, and there was a doubt of another Scotch clergyman coming out. Mr. Hardy thought however, that the Church of England should not be left to such an uncertainty; and advised that another place should be built purposely for the establishment, offering at the same time £.500 towards it; adding, 'I will give in a lower estimate than any other person, and I will give £.500 out of that. The large and handsome Wesleyan chapel was built by this man's son. The buildings do them much credit as men of abilities, and the liberal offer speaks a volume for the father as a generous man and a christian."

Mr. Steele, in his answer to the queries of Governor Parry,

gives the following account of the free negroes in Barbadoes*:-" It is in general obvious to any person of observation, that free negroes and mulattoes must apply themselves to some kind of industry, as they are never seen begging, either males or females; whereas the Island in general is pestered with white beggars, of both sexes, and of all ages, covered only with filthy rags; while the free negroes and mulattoes are well clothed, and appear to be well fed. Probably they do not offer themselves to work for daily wages in the field mixed with plantation slaves, because, knowing themselves to be either negroes or the descendants of negroes, legally exposed to any violence which an angry overseer or other white servant might commit against them with impunity, they prudently employ themselves in other ways. Many of the men work at the various trades of smiths, carpenters, and masons; and serve as militia tenants, and cultivate their tenements industriously. Two free black tradesmen, a mason and a carpenter, are militia tenants on the estate of this respondent, and labour on their tenements with their own hands, living with sobriety and good order. Several others rent small parcels of land in this neighbourhood; and some of them by their industry have been able to purchase little freeholds, and build good habitations on them."

Dr. Dickson says of the same people†:—"Of one thing I am as certain as any man can be of a future event, that the generally peaceable, sober, industrious, and even sensible people of the free coloured class in Barbadoes, about 5000 in number (he is speaking both of free blacks and mulattoes), would thankfully receive, and endeavour to merit any privilege which might be conferred on them. Above six-and-twenty years ago I publicly declared my good opinion of them, which has since been corroborated by Mr. Steele and General Tottenham, and still more by their own general good conduct."

That the emancipated slaves in the colonies maintain themselves by their own industry, appears plainly from the returns of paupers made by the colonies. "The enfranchised population of all the West Indian colonies are generally free from want, live in comfort, and accumulate

property."

That they are generally placed above want, appears from this; that though their number amounts to about 90,000, yet, of that number, only 227 appear to have received even

+ Mitigation. Introduction, p. 26.

^{*} Printed in 1789. See DICKSON's Mitigation, p. 174.

occasional relief as paupers during the years 1821 to 1825, and these chiefly the concubines or children of destitute whites: while, of about 65,000 whites, in the same time, 1675 received relief. The proportion therefore, of enfranchised persons receiving any kind of aid as paupers in the West Indies, is 1 in nearly 400; whereas, the proportion among the whites of the West Indies is about 1 in 40; and in England generally 1 in 12 or 13; in some counties 1 in 8 or 9.

There can be no doubt therefore, that the enfranchised population of the West Indies are subsisted by their own efforts: and not only do they subsist, but they subsist in comfort, and even accumulate wealth. And this they do, though pressed down by civil and political disabilities of the most discouraging kind; and although the scope of their industry is narrowed, and its efforts are repressed by cruel and invidious exclusions and distinctions. If any proof of this statement were wanted, it would be sufficient to state the uncontradicted details laid before Parliament in the last session, by Lord Harrowby and Dr. Lushington, respecting the state of the enfranchised population of Jamaica, being nearly a moiety of that of the whole of the British West Indies. Uncontradicted admissions to the same effect might be cited from the discussions which have taken place even in the Assembly of Jamaica, on the claims of the enfranchised inhabitants of that Island to be relieved from their civil disabilities:

In the colony of Trinidad, the enfranchised persons outnumber by four to one the whites. The whites are 3500, and the free blacks and people of colour upwards of 15,000, some say 17,000. And what is the condition of these last? There is not a single pauper among them, not a single individual receiving aid from public charity. They live comfortably and independently; and nearly half of the property of the island is said to be in their hands. There, it is admitted on all hands, that the enfranchised Africans and their descendants have long since emerged from barbarism, have become enlightened, have acquired wealth, are highly respectable in character, and are rapidly advancing in knowledge and refinement.

In St. Lucia, the enfranchised part of the population is three times the number of the whites. The governor, General Mainwaring, distinctly states, that there is not a single pauper in this colony. Mr. Jeremie, the Chief Justice of that colony, thus expresses himself respecting them:—"The emancipated negroes have been taxed with laziness; but scarcely is a road opened in any part of

the country, but the borders are occupied by free settlers." Much of the imputation on the industry of the free negroes and of their alleged aversion to agricultural labour, he conceives to arise from their not being permitted to retain and pay rent for those provision grounds which they had cultivated with care as slaves; or from the great difficulty they experience (in consequence of the prejudice existing against their holding lands) in finding another spot, and obtaining a sure title to it, where they may begin cultivation on their own account. The slaves, when manumitted, lose the land which had cost them so much trouble to cultivate. The masters, either from prejudice or from some strange and unaccountable policy, instead of encouraging them to remain on the estate to which they might thus become attached, and where they would be ready to lend their assistance when wanted, it seems, expel them from it. If however they were permitted to hold when free, paying a small rent for it, the same spot of land they had previously improved, or were encouraged to have another prepared to which they could remove, the ground, he conceives, for this charge of indolence would be taken away. He thinks it quite unlikely in that case, that persons so shrewd as slaves are, by habits abstemious and frugal, and fond of hoarding their earnings, will become less solicitous about money and wealth when they can devote more time to amassing it, and when they hold it by a safer tenure.

In Grenada, the enfranchised population is four times the number of the whites, nor is there one pauper among them. In June 1823, a petition was presented by this class to the assembly of Grenada, affirming their loyalty and general good conduct, the largeness of their contributions to the revenue, and their importance to the defence and security of the colony. They distinctly stated, that they possessed no small portion of the property of the colony; and that of the capital town in it two-thirds actually belonged to them. This petition was submitted to a committee of the assembly; and on their report the assembly resolved, "that the free coloured inhabitants of these islands are a respectable well behaved class of the community, and possessed of consider-

able property in the colony."

Another irresistible proof of the state of comfort in which the enfranchised population of the West Indies are placed, may be found in the rapid growth of their numbers by natural increase. And this progressive increase is rendered the more remarkable by the circumstance of the progressive decrease of every other class of the community, of the whites on the one hand and of the slaves on the other. In Berbice, the number of enfranchised persons had increased in the five years, 1821 to 1825, from 669 to 835; although in that time there had been been only forty-nine manumissions. Here we have an increase by births of 117 in 669 in five years, being at the rate of three and a half per cent. per annum; while the slaves have been decreasing in Berbice, and still more in Demerara; in which last colony their decrease has been proceeding at the rate of nearly two per cent. per annum. Statements similar to this in effect might be multiplied. Every colony in the West Indies

would supply materials.

To these proofs that the enfranchised population are not wanting in industry, it may be added, that their reputation for loyalty is untainted. They have never been charged with conduct or with purposes adverse to the public safety. And as to crimes of another description, though it would be too much to expect that among so large a body (and especially a body so very unfavourably circumstanced with respect to the means of education and instruction) criminals should not be found; yet it is confidently believed, that the porportion of enfranchised persons convicted of crimes in the West Indies is smaller than that of any other class, whether free or enslaved. And for the elucidation of this fact, it may be sufficient to refer to the records of the West Indian judicatories generally. We have only found one actual return on this subject among the parliamentary papers. It is from the island of Jamaica. The enfranchised inhabitants of that island are considerably more numerous than the whites. And yet by a return from several of its parishes, ordered to be printed by the House of Commons on the 12th of July, 1815, it appears that the proportion of criminal convictions of whites, and of enfranchised persons, was as twenty-four of the former to eight of the latter. We have been assured that the proportions would not be found materially different in the other colonies.

As to what respects general civilization also, it may be equally demonstrated, that under great and numerous disadvantages (disadvantages imposed upon them by the system of oppression and degradation to which they are forced to submit), they have not only not retrograded since their enfranchisement, but have considerably advanced. Of this, the comfort in which they live, the increase of their numbers, their comparative freedom from crime, their peaceable demeanour as subjects, and their accumulation of property, furnish incontestable and conclusive evidence. But, in addition to these, the progress of light and knowledge among them, and their thirst for the benefits of education for them-

selves and their children, are quite decisive, and do not permit a single doubt to hang upon the question. And if we contemplate in this view the disadvantages and obstacles with which they have had to contend, the credit due to them for having made any advance whatever in civilization is very considerably enhanced. They have been oppressed, degraded, discountenanced, and trampled upon. They have been shut out from every office of trust or emolument; from every thing which might stimulate them to acquire knowledge, or to cultivate their intellectual powers. They have had the very worst moral examples exhibited to them by the whole body of their superiors, who have been in fact the very instruments of poisoning the sources of moral improvement, by seducing their women into a participation of their worst vices, and by thus spreading the taint of profligacy, like a moral leprosy, over the whole face of society*. They have thus been not only habituated to the spectacle, and exposed to the contaminating example of the grossest immoralities from infancy, but their women have been taught to regard a participation in them as the only path to wealth and distinction, as a subject of glory, instead of a subject of reproach or shame. They have been deprived of every incentive to honourable conduct; not only by being shut out from all places of trust and emolument, but by being denied every active right of citizenship whatever; having been for the most part excluded, until recently, even from giving evidence in Courts of Justice, in cases where whites were concerned. Besides this, until the last two years, no measures were even begun to be taken by the local governments to furnish them with the means of education, or with moral and religious instruction of any kind. The cultivation of their minds or of their manners was not only utterly neglected, but actually perverted. They have had no communion with their superiors but that of vice; no contest on the part of their rulers but what tended to sink them deep in debasement. And yet, notwithstanding all this, they have been emerging from their original state of incivilization, with a progress which has gone beyond all reasonable anticipations. Many of them will now bear an advantageous comparison, not only in respect of wealth, the fruit of industry, but in respect of their moral qualities, and even of their intellectual acquirements, with multitudes of the whites who contemn them as an inferior race, and who would deem themselves degraded by sitting down with them at the same table +."

^{*} See Bryan, Edwards, Stewart, Williamson, &c., &c. † Abridged from the Anti-Slavery Reporter for August, 1827.

The conduct and circumstances of the negroes who have emancipated themselves by their own industry, in the Spanish and Portuguese settlements, are equally encouraging to the friends of emancipation with those of the free negroes in our

own colonies.

"In the colonies of Spain and Portugal (particularly of the former), the manumission of slaves has been liberally encouraged*. The happy effects of the liberal policy of Spain are visible even in Cuba, notwithstanding the immense importations of new negroes which have taken place of late years into that island. But in all the other colonies of Spain where these importations had ceased, it had issued at length in the almost entire extinction of negro slavery; and that without any convulsion, nay, without loss to the master, or injury to the slave. In the Spanish American possessions it has always been the established practice to encourage manumissions. A slave had a right by law to his freedom as soon as he could repay to his master the sum he had cost. In order to enable the slave to do this, he was not only allowed the undisturbed enjoyment of the sabbath, but he was allowed also one day in the week for the cultivation of his provision ground. As soon as by his industry and frugality he had accumulated the fifth part of his value, it was usual for the master, on being paid that amount, to relinquish to the slave another day of the week; and so on until he had repaid the whole of his original cost; and thus became altogether free. Notwithstanding this liberal policy, the enfranchised slaves have never been known in the Spanish possessions to rise against their former masters, or to excite those who were still slaves to seek any other method of deliverance than they themselves had pursued; whilst they formed by their number and hardihood, a valuable means of defence from foreign aggression. In consequence of this system, the whole negro population of the Spanish possessions were so rapidly approaching to emancipation, that about the year 1790 the number of free blacks and people of colour somewhat exceeded in all of them the number of slaves. Since that time, in Cuba alone, in consequence of the immense importations from Africa into that island, has this proportion been diminished; but even there the free black and coloured population amounts to from a third to a half of the number of slaves. In the other trans-atlantic possessions of Spain their number has gone on progressively increasing, until now slavery can hardly be said to have an existence there. And this happy consummation has been effected without any

Negro Slavery, p. 85.

commotion, and with the ready concurrence of the master, who has not only not been a loser, but has been a gainer by

the change.

The happy effects of this mode of manumission are well illustrated in the following extract from Humboldt's Travels: —"We observed with a lively interest the great number of scattered houses in the valley inhabited by freemen. In all these excursions we were agreeably surprised, not only at the progress of agriculture, but the increase of a free laborious population, accustomed to toil and too poor to rely on the assistance of slaves. White and black farmers had everywhere small separate establishments. Our host, whose father had a revenue of 40,000 piastres, possessing more lands than he could clear, distributed those in the valley of Aragua among poor families who chose to apply themselves to the cultivation of cotton. He endeavoured to surround his ample plantations with freemen, who working as they chose, either on their own land or in the neighbouring plantations, supplied him with day labourers at the time of harvest. Nobly occupied on the means best adapted gradually to extinguish the slavery of the blacks in these colonies, Count Torar flattered himself with the double hope of rendering slaves less necessary to the landholders, and furnishing the freed men with opportunities of becoming farmers. On departing for Europe he had parcelled out and let a part of the lands of Cura. Four years after, at his return to America, he found on this spot, finely cultivated in cotton, a little hamlet of thirty or forty houses, which is called Punto Zamuro, and which we afterwards visited with The inhabitants of this hamlet are nearly all mulattoes, zumboes, or free blacks. This example of letting out land has been followed by other great proprietors. price of labour is cheaper here than in France. A free man working as a day labourer is paid, in the valleys of Aragua and in the Llanos, four or five piastres a month, not including food, which is very cheap on account of the abundance of meat and vegetables. I love to dwell on these details of colonial industry, because they prove to the inhabitants of Europe (what to the enlightened inhabitants of the colonies has long ceased to be doubtful) that the continent of Spanish America can produce sugar and indigo by free hands; and that the unhappy slaves are capable of becoming peasants, farmers, and landholders."

Mr. Koster, an Englishman living in Brazil, tells us*:—"I have for some years resided in a country where the manu-

^{*} Amelioration of Slavery, published in No. 16 of the Pamphleteer, p 326.

mission of slaves by their own exertions was frequent, and from the system I could not perceive that aught but what was good proceeded. Curiosity led me to make inquiries. I had at that time so high an opinion of Great Britain and all her dependencies, that I thought in every thing she exceeded her neighbours; little did I think then how superior the Portuguese regulations and the Brazilian practices were to those of the British nation, and to those of the inhabitants of the British trans-atlantic possessions. Far was I from imagining that I should discover how much we were behind the colonists of another nation. Far was I from supposing that I should discover the Brazilian slave in the enjoyment of some steps of superiority in religious, in moral, and in physical benefit. There are black regiments composed entirely and exclusively of black creole soldiers, commanded by black creole officers from the corporal to the colonel. I have seen the several guard-houses of the town occupied by these troops. Far from any apprehension being entertained on this score, it is well known that the quietude of this country, and the feeling of safety which every one possesses, although surrounded by slaves, proceeds from the contentedness of the free people."

Mr. Koster, in his travels in the Brazils observes*:—
"A man in a state of bondage will not be so serviceable to the community as one who acts for himself. This undoubted and indisputable fact must be still more strongly impressed on the mind of every one who has been in the habit of seeing the manner in which slaves perform their daily labour. Their indifference, and the extreme slowness of every movement, plainly point out the trifling interest which they have in the advancement of the work. I have watched two parties labouring in the same field, one of free persons the other of slaves, which occasionally though very seldom occurs. The former are singing, joking, and laughing, and are always actively turning hand and foot; whilst the latter are silent, and if they are viewed from a little distance their movements are scarcely to be perceived."

The prosperous state of the American colony of Liberia (on the western coast of Africa) is well calculated to allay the fears of those who think that emancipated negroes would not be capable of taking care of their own interests, and of forming a respectable class in civilized society. This colony, consisting of free blacks and coloured persons from America, and of liberated Africans, was set on foot in 1822. The following particulars respecting it are taken from some

^{*} Amelioration of Slavery, published in No. 16 of the Pamphleteer, p. 336.

intelligence circulated by the managers of the American Colonization Society in 1826*:- "Dispatches have been received from the colony at Liberia, bearing date January 23, 1826. The communications from Mr. Ashmun, the intelligent agent there, are copious in detailing the condition of the colony in all the relations which it sustains. It appears that there is a degree of prosperity in the present, and security as to the future state of that establishment, which with all their expectations the friends of African colonization could scarcely have been led to hope. In all the internal concerns and foreign relations of the colony there is every evidence of growing prosperity, strength, and security. As the settlement has increased in population, commerce, and wealth, the moral character has advanced; the intelligence and virtue of the people evincing the capacity for self-government. Agriculture and commerce are now in such happy operation at Monrovia (the town of the colony) as to assure the adequacy of the colony to its own maintenance in its present condition. The trade in rice, coffee, camwood, and ivory, is already considerable; and is so regulated as to inspire the confidence of the natives in the liberal and fair dealings of the colonists. During the past year two churches have been built. Five schools are in active operation, besides sabbath schools; the children, emigrant and native, are well instructed. adults are busily engaged in finishing and improving their dwellings and property. Mechanics receive two dollars a day; labourers from three quarters of a dollar to a dollar and a quarter, with constant employment. A vessel of ten tons has been built by one of the colonists, several other boats belong to the establishment. Fort Stockton has been rebuilt, and with some other fortifications renders the town perfectly secure against any foe. Two well-disciplined companies, one of infantry the other of artillery, present an active force ready for any service at a moment's warning. The emigrants from Boston have been received as brothers and sisters.

"To the free people of colour who may desire to emigrate, the board of managers declare, that a peaceful, healthful prosperous community has been founded at Monrovia; and was at the date of the last advices in most flourishing circumstances."

The place is remarkable for the general piety of the colonists: on this topic Mr. Ashmun says:—" Happily a large proportion of the settlers were previous to their emigration the members of religious connections in America. A change of circumstances, the greatest almost that could

arrive, has severely tried the sincerity of their professions;

and, as was to be anticipated, has proved that a few were little worthy of the character which they had assumed; but most of them have sustained the trial with honour, and are now becoming settled in their circumstances and fixed and regular in their religious habits and duties. The pains which this class of settlers have bestowed on their own religious improvement have both qualified and stimulated them to advance the spiritual interest of others, and through the divine blessing their example and exertions have been The sabbath is almost universally observed with all the outward marks of religious decorum: domestic worship is common: Sunday schools both for native and settlers' children are zealously sustained, numerously attended, and productive of the happiest fruits: there is a general attendance of all classes on the public and occasional worship of God; and charitable and pious associations (chiefly for the religious instruction of native children) appear to have been undertaken in that spirit of intelligent zeal which promises both perseverance and success." The following extracts are taken from a later report of the American Colonization Society: - "The trade of Liberia has increased with a rapidity almost unexampled; and while it has supplied the colonists not only with the necessaries but with the conveniences and comforts of life, the good faith with which it has been conducted has conciliated the friendship of the natives, and acquired the confidence of foreigners. Between the 1st of January and the 25th of July, 1826, no less than fifteen vessels touched at Monrovia; and purchased the produce of the country to the amount, according to the best probable estimate, of 43,980 dollars, African value. A gentleman in Portland has commenced a regular trade with the colony; and for his last cargo landed in Liberia, amounting to 8000 dollars, he received payment in the course of ten The advantages of this trade to the colony are manifest from the high price of labour, and from the easy and comfortable circumstances of the settlers. Mr. Ashmun says:— An industrious family, twelve months in Africa, destitute of the means of furnishing an abundant table, is not known; and an individual of whatever age or sex without ample provision of decent apparel cannot it is believed be found. Every family, and nearly every single adult person in the colony, have the means of employing from one to four native labourers at an expense of from four to six dollars the month; and several of the settlers, when called upon in consequence of sudden emergencies of the public service, have made repeated advances of merchantable produce to the amount of from 300 to 600 dollars each.' The new agency house, market house Lancasterian school, and town house, in Monrovia, were some months since far advanced; and the finishing strokes were about to be given to government house on the St. Paul's. 'The wing of the old agency house has been handsomely fitted up for the colonial library, which now consists of twelve hundred volumes, systematically arranged in glazed cases with appropriate hangings; all the books are substantially covered and accurately labeled; and piles of more than ten newspapers, more or less complete, are preserved: the library is fitted up so as to answer the purpose of a reading room; and it is intended to make it a museum of all the natural curiosities of Africa which can be procured.

"The moral and religious character of the colony exerts a powerful influence on its social and civil condition. That piety which had guided most of the early emigrants, even before they left this country, to respectability and usefulness among their associates, prepared them, in laying the foundation of a colony, to act with a degree of wisdom and energy which no earthly motives could inspire. Humble and for the most part unlettered men-born and bred in circumstances the most unfavourable to mental culture unsustained by the hope of renown, and unfamiliar with the history of great achievements and heroic virtues—theirs was nevertheless a spirit unmoved by danger or by sufferings, which misfortunes could not darken nor death dismay. Strange would it have been had the religion of every individual of these early settlers proved genuine: but most have preserved untarnished the honour of their profession; and to the purity of their morals and the consistency of their conduct is in a great measure to be attributed the social order and general prosperity of the colony of Liberia. Their example has proved most salutary; and while subsequent emigrants have found themselves awed and restrained by their regularity, seriousness, and devotion, the poor natives have given their confidence, and acknowledged the excellence of practical christianity. Mr. Ashmun writes:- 'It deserves record, that religion has been the principal agent employed in laying and confirming the foundations of the settlement.' To this sentiment—ruling, restraining, and actuating the minds of the colonists-must be referred the whole strength of our civil government.

"Examples of intemperance, profaneness, or licentiousness are extremely rare; and vice, wherever it exists, is obliged to seek concealment from the public eye."

The following more recent intelligence from the settlement

is taken from the American Missionary Herald :- "The number of coloured people associated together at Monrovia is about 1000. The children are instructed in six schools modelled on the Lancasterian system, and united under a common superintendent: every child is required to attend school. Towards defraying the expenses of education and also of the civil and judicial departments of Government, 1100 dollars per annum have been subscribed by the colonists. Four factories or trading establishments have been formed on the coast. Between these factories and Monrovia a small schooner belonging to the colony is kept constantly running; making on an average one trip weekly, and bringing at each return a cargo worth about 350 dollars. The nett profits of this trade to the colony are estimated at 4700 dollars; this is one of the sources to which Monrovia is indebted for its abundant means of subsistence, and for its remarkable prosperity. The government is in regular and efficient operation; and the inhabitants enjoy in abundance the comforts of life; and a number have acquired property amounting in each case to several thousand dollars. A missionary society has been formed, which held its first annual meeting on the 16th of April: forty-five members paid one dollar each. Mr. Ashmun states, in May:—'The six schools in our two principal settlements are, exclusive of sunday schools, which were last week reported to me to comprehend, along with all the children, two-thirds of the whole adult population of Monrovia. An emulation for improvement altogether unknown and incredible among the coloured people of America, has seized upon our colonists in this country: it needs only encouragement to produce great results."

I shall now give some account of the conduct and circumstances of several bodies of free negroes who have not obtained their freedom by their own industry; but have had it given to them in various manners, and under various circumstances.

During the first American war a number of slaves ran away from their North American masters, and joined the British army*. When peace came, it was determined to give them their liberty, and to disband them in Nova Scotia, and to settle them there upon grants of land as British subjects and as free men. Their number, comprehending men, women, and children, were 2000 and upwards. To gain their livelihood some of them worked upon little portions of land as their own; others worked as carpenters; others became fishermen; and others worked for hire in other ways.

In process of time, having embraced Christianity, they raised places of worship of their own; and had ministers of their own from their own body. They led a harmless life, and gained the character of an industrious and honest people from their white neighbours. A few years afterwards the land in Nova Scotia being found too poor to answer, and the climate too cold for their constitutions, a number of them, to the amount of between 1300 and 1400, volunteered to form a new colony, which was then first thought of, at Sierra Leone. Accordingly, having been conveyed there, they realized the object in view; and they are to be found there, they or their descendants, most of them in independent and some of them in affluent circumstances at the present day.

Many hundreds of the negroes who lately formed the West Indian black regiments were removed to Sierra Leone in 1819, and disbanded there; receiving their discharge as free men. Some of these had been originally purchased not as slaves but recruits; and others were drawn from among the slaves liberated from the holds of contraband slave-ships. They had all served as soldiers in the West Indies. They were set at liberty at once at Sierra Leone, where they founded Waterloo, Hastings, and other villages, being settled upon lands given them by the Government, and they have conducted themselves with propriety.

Mr. Kenneth Macauley's account of the state of this colony in 1827*, proves the propriety and good conduct of these two bodies of freed negroes; as well as of the negroes taken out of the captured slave-ships, and established as free men at Sierra Leone:-" The colony contains about 20,000 free negroes, who have been collected on that spot from various parts of the world; some from North America, some from the mountains of Jamaica, and others from the immediately adjoining nations of Africa; but the great majority of them consists of those who have been rescued from the holds of slave vessels; and landed on its shores in the lowest state of misery, debility, and degradation. These liberated captives have attained to various degress (according to the length of their residence and other circumstances) of moral improvement, civilization, and prosperity. are all living under the protection of British law, which they enjoy as fully as any other class of the inhabitants; being equally subject to its penalties, and equally bound to fulfil

^{*} The Colony of Sierra Leone vindicated, 1827, p. 105. Mr. Macauley lived eighteen years in the colony, and was for some time the acting governor.

its obligations. Nearly the whole police of the colony is administered by them; and in no part of the world is justice more freely and equitably dispensed, or its decisions more promptly and willingly obeyed. And although the nature of the population might not seem to authorize such a conclusion, yet I can confidently appeal to the calendars and police records as a proof that in regard to the unfrequency of crime it may bear a favourable comparison with most parts of His Majesty's dominions.

"They have built for themselves various and expensive places of worship; some of them are employed in ministering to the spiritual necessities of their brethren; and a more orderly, decent, and well-conducted people, considering their

circumstances, is nowhere to be found.

"It is not true that they will not work, and work diligently, for wages; nor is it true that their wants and desires are bounded by a bare subsistence, by food and clothing. They were all landed in the colony without a single article of any description in the shape of property, almost naked as they were born. Their hands were their only capital, and many of them scarcely knew the use of these. Whatever property they now possess—their money, their shops, their vessels, their houses, their furniture, are all the fruits of their own industry.

"Several of the black and coloured colonists are persons both of property and respectability, and are admitted to the tables of the principal Europeans. Some of them have served, with great credit to themselves and benefit to the colony, the offices of alderman, mayor, coroner, and sheriff; and their mercantile transactions are of considerable magnitude. Numbers of them are possessed of excellent stone houses well furnished. Their clothing is equal to persons of their rank in England, and their style of living is respectable. Their families are brought up in a decent, moral manner; and some, not satisfied with the means of education afforded by the colony, have sent their children to England.

"The duties of commissioners for the recovery of small debts, of grand and petty juries, of head and petty constables, and of the other offices of police, have been performed by the inhabitants generally in a manner which has given

satisfaction to every magistrate."

During the last American war some hundreds of American slaves joined the British standard*. When the campaign was over it was determined to fix them in Trinidad as free labourers. These men are now earning their own livelihood with industry and good conduct.

^{*} CLARKSON'S Thoughts, p. 15.

Some of the black regiments before mentioned were disbanded in the West Indies, the whole of them receiving their discharge as freemen in 1819; they have also conducted

themselves with propriety.

In 1821 considerable bodies of slaves were emancipated at once in Columbia. General Bolivar began by enfranchising his own slaves, to the number of between 700 and 800. On the 19th of July the general Congress of Columbia passed a decree by which all slaves (and their number was considerable) who had assisted in a military capacity in achieving the independence of the republic were at once declared free. A fund was established at the same time by a general tax upon property for the purchase of the freedom of adults in each district every year. "If ever," says Mr. Buxton*, "there was an opportunity of trying whether the principle was productive of peace or of convulsion, that opportunity was now afforded. Columbia was overrun by hostile armies. The masters were often obliged to abandon their property. The black population (including Indians) amounted to 900,000 persons; of these, a large number were suddenly emancipated. What has been the effect? Where the opportunities of insurrection have been so frequent and so tempting, what has been the effect? Mr. Ravenga authorizes me to say, that the effect has been a degree of docility on the part of the blacks, a degree of confidence and security on the part of the whites, unknown in any preceding period of the history of Columbia." Bolivar issued a proclamation a few months ago, in which he speaks of the salutary operation of the law for extinguishing slavery in Columbia, and promulgates some fresh regulations for rendering the law more certainly efficient, and for ensuring the due application of the funds destined by the state for that object to its proper and special ends.

It may be said, that none of these accounts of the good conduct and prosperity of free negroes apply exactly to the subject under consideration. The emancipated negroes of the West Indies, of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and of the United States, had freed themselves by their own exertions, and must therefore have been the most industrious and moral of the slaves; the disbanded soldiers had been subject to military discipline; and the recaptured negroes of Sierra Leone had not been, or at least had only been for a very short time, subject to the degrading influence of slavery. But it should be considered, that it is impossible that many

^{*} Substance of the Debate of the House of Commons, 15th May, 1823, p. 14.

instances should be produced that are exactly in point: neither those who wish for, nor those who fear an early emancipation, can prove the correctness of their views by much direct proof, because few slaves have ever been placed precisely in the position from which such proof could be taken. It must surely however be allowed, that when it is shown that a great number of negroes who have obtained their freedom under a great variety of circumstances, have led orderly, inoffensive, useful lives, and have been able to support themselves and their families in respectability and comfort, a strong presumption is afforded, that if the slaves in our colonies were emancipated, though not precisely under any of those circumstances, and if proper precautionary and kind measures were taken, they also would behave peaceably towards the whites, and would be able to maintain themselves and their families.

We are not, however, entirely without cases in point, though they must necessarily be few. I shall first mention one, which seems almost precisely applicable—the emancipation of the slaves of Samuel Nottingham. It does not appear that there was any preparatory discipline in this case, and certainly there was no previous course of industry pursued by the slaves, with the view of procuring their freedom. Their orderly industrious conduct, when emancipated, will therefore afford a presumption in favour of such conduct in others who should obtain their freedom in a similar manner; though it must be allowed that we cannot draw an equally strong inference from their prosperity, as their kind and equitable master gave them not their liberty only, but an estate and stock to begin their new career with.

In the year 1776, Samuel Nottingham, a quaker, who became possessed of a small estate in Tortola, to which were attached twenty-five negroes, viz. six men, ten women, four boys, and five girls, determined on manumitting them. He accordingly did so, by a deed executed on the 30th of June, 1776. He gave them a plantation, called East-End Plantation, in Fathog Bay, with every thing thereunto belonging,

and secured it to them and their offspring.

"In the year 1822, this little colony of free persons was visited several times by two highly-respectable gentlemen, on whose authority we are enabled to state the following particulars:—'Of the original persons liberated, nine are still alive; besides whom, there are twenty-five of their children and nine grand-children, making in all forty-three persons. The whole of them reside on the same plantation, which they have ever since cultivated. Half of it is chiefly in provisions, and the rest is used as pasturage for their stock,

which consists of twenty-eight cows, thirteen goats, and thirteen hogs. Formerly they cultivated cotton; but the price falling very low, they did not continue to plant it. Jeffery Nottingham, one of those originally emancipated, exclusive of his share in the plantation and stock, possesses five acres of land, a house in Spanish Town, and a vessel of twenty-three feet keel. Diana and Eve (born since 1776) have each a boat of seventeen and fourteen feet keel. For some years the seasons were so bad that they found it difficult to get water for their stock, and got little return for their labour; but still they had been able to support themselves, and to acquire the property mentioned above, while they increased in number from twenty-five to forty-three. Not one of them is now in debt; and their property is free from all incumbrance. Twelve of the grown-up persons are members of the Methodist society, and with their children attend regularly the Methodist chapel at East End. During the whole period since their emancipation none of them have been sued in court or brought before a magistrate to answer to any complaint. Several of them can read and write. Jeffery's wife Grace acts as schoolmistress: she reads well. They have lately built three houses in their village, of wood and shingled. The whole of their houses had been destroyed by the hurricane of 1819, and have since been rebuilt. They are a fine healthy race, all black, having intermarried with each other, and seem to dwell very happily together*."

The next instance is also very nearly applicable. The negroes, whose story I am about to relate, suddenly gained their liberty; and there is not the least reason to think that they were better qualified to make a good use of it than any other slaves in the colonies would have been. On the contrary, as they were runaways, it will probably be thought that they were rather below the average in this respect; and they seem to have possessed no peculiar advantage of any kind, except that they found some land to settle on when they became free. The following statement is given on the authority of different Jamaica newspapers, as quoted in an Account of a Shooting Excursion in Jamaica, in October 1824:—"About twelve years before that time, a dozen negroes, who had escaped from slavery, settled themselves in the back districts of Trelawny, in the interior of the Here they built a town, consisting of a few houses, and brought nearly two hundred acres of land into profitable bearing." The Montego Bay Gazette gives the following account of the state in which a party, who went in

^{*} Appendix to Substance of Debate on Mr. Buxton's Motion in 1823, p. 235.

1824 to seize the settlers as runaways, found their town and lands:-" They had about two hundred acres of very fine provisions, in full bearing, with abundance of hogs and poultry. The houses appear to be of considerable magnitude, are well built, shingled, and floored; one of the buildings is seventy feet long, another forty, and few under twenty-five. We also understand that there is, near the town, from thirty to forty acres of beautiful coffee and a large field of canes." The Cornwall Courier gives nearly the same account, and adds:-" We understand a runaway who is taken mentions, there is a track to the town from Windsor Pen, by which the negroes of different estates have been in the practice of going with asses, to exchange salt provisions with the runaways for their ground provisions; and with which they have added to the supply of the Sunday market in this town."

The Cornwall Gazette says: - "After our last publication, we gave circulation to a bulletin, briefly relating the particulars of the now famous town, called by its refined and polished inhabitants, 'we no sen, you no come.' The party of militia and maroons under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, after a march of eight hours reached the first of their provision-grounds, consisting of a cocoa piece, nearly a mile from the town. The party now having full possession of the town, quietly took up their quarters in the houses where the former possessors had been busily employed in culinary affairs. One of the men who was mortally wounded, said that they were in number nine men, eight women, and four children. It is conjectured by persons whose knowledge and veracity are unquestionable, that between 100 and 150 acres of fine arable land, thickly planted with provisions in the finest condition, exist in the neighbourhood of the town."

The writer of the pamphlet adds:—"We have looked over the different Jamaica journals before mentioned, indeed over and over again, but we find no direct charge of any kind against the inhabitants of this little settlement. It appears, from the name given to their settlement, 'We no sen, they no come,' that it was their policy not to stir from home, not to be seen, not to attract notice. That they adhered to this policy is pretty evident from the same newspapers, for nearly 200 acres, planted with cocoa, coffee, and canes, and moreover thickly planted with provisions, and besides in the best condition, would have kept nine men, eight women, and four children pretty constantly employed, so as not to have allowed them many opportunities of going abroad. It is also to be presumed, from the

same newspapers, that they did not leave their houses even to buy what they wanted, or to dispose of their surplus produce; for it is stated there that there was a tract to their town by which certain negroes went to them with asses to exchange salt provisions for dry provisions. All the circumstances then mentioned in the newspapers just quoted (and these are given by their enemies), warrant us in concluding that they kept themselves peaceably at home, and that they did no injury to their neighbours. Indeed, so far from being injurious, it appears that they were useful to them: for it is said, that through the medium of the negroes who came to them with their asses, they contributed to supply with ground provisions the Sunday markets in one of the adjoining towns. The facts which have come out in the preceding account convey to us instruction on many points. They enable us first to refute those calumnies which describe the negro as insensible to the value of the blessings of freedom, and as so incapable of appreciating these blessings as to be fit and even designed for no other than a servile and ignominious rank in the human family. They convince us, secondly, that negroes are able to manage their own concerns, and that they would work, if emancipated, willingly; and that they need no impulse from the whip, but the natural impulse only of their own reflections. No one can look back to what these fugitives are described to have done in the way of cultivation, and believe that negroes would not work when emancipated, if a proper stimulus were given them."

The prosperous state of the plantations in Mexico, as described by Mr. Ward, furnishes a proof that the interest of the master does not necessarily suffer by the conversion of slaves into free labourers. In the highly-cultivated valley visited by Mr. Ward, the slaves were all voluntarily manumitted by their masters: the following extracts from his communication to Mr. Canning on the subject show very

satisfactorily the salutary effects of the measure :-

" Mexico, March 13, 1826.

"Sir,—The possibility of introducing a system of free labour into the West India Islands having been so much discussed in England, I conceived that it might not be uninteresting to His Majesty's Government to receive some details respecting the result of the experiment in this country, where it certainly has had a fair trial.

"I accordingly took advantage of Mr. Morier's stay here, to visit the valley of Cuernavaca and Cuantla Amilpas, which supplies a great part of the federation with sugar and coffee, although not a single slave is at present employed in

their cultivation.

"I have the honour to enclose such details as I have thought best calculated to show both the scale upon which these estates are worked, and the complete success with which the abolition of slavery has in this instance been attended.

" H. G. WARD." (Signed)

" To the Right Hon. G. Canning, &c."

[Enclosure.] "The valley which extends almost uninterruptedly from Cuernavaca to Cuantla Amilpas and Iyncar (covering a space of about forty miles) is situated

on the road to Acapulco.

"It is believed that the sugar-cane was first planted there about one hundred years ago; from that time the number of sugar estates has gone on increasing until there is now hardly an acre of ground on the whole plain which is not turned to account.

"The cultivation was originally carried on entirely by slaves, who were purchased at Vera Cruz at from 300 to 400 It was found however that this system was attended with considerable inconvenience, it being impossible to secure a sufficient supply of slaves during a war. The losses likewise at all times were great, as many of the slaves were unable to support the fatigue and changes of temperature to which they were exposed on the journey, and perished either on the road or soon after their arrival.

"Several of the great proprietors were induced by these circumstances to give liberty to a certain number of their slaves annually, and to encourage marriages between them

and the Indians of the country.

"This plan proved so eminently successful, that on some of the largest estates there was not a single slave in the year 1808.

"The policy of the measure became still more apparent

on the breaking out of the revolution in 1810.

"The planters who had not adopted the system of gradual emancipation before that period, saw themselves abandoned, and were forced in many instances to give up working their estates, as their slaves took advantage of the approach of the insurgents to join them en masse, while those who had provided themselves with a mixed cast of free labourers retained, even during the worst times, a sufficient number of men to enable them to continue to cultivate their lands, although upon a smaller scale.

"The insurrection however proved highly injurious to the proprietors in general. Several of the haciendas have not even yet recovered the losses which they then sustained. In general however the last eight years of comparative tranquillity have been sufficient to restore things to their ancient state; and I could not learn that the produce of the different estates about Cuernavaca had ever greatly exceeded those of the last twelve months.

"The number of workmen generally employed upon an estate capable of producing 40,000 arrobas of sugar amounts to 150, with occasional additions when the season is late or

the work has been retarded by any accidental cause.

"The labourers are mostly paid by the piece, and many of them can earn, if industrious, from six to seven rials per

diem (3s. 3d. or 3s. 9½d. English money).

"Fifty men are employed in watering the canes, twenty in cutting, ten in bringing the cut canes from the field (each with six mules), twenty-five (mostly boys) in separating the green tops, which they use for fodder, and binding up the remainder for the muleteers; twenty men, divided into gangs of four each, in feeding the engine day and night; fourteen attend the boilers, twelve keep up the fires, four turn the cane in the sun after the juice has been expressed, and dried for fue, and ten are constantly at work in the warehouse clarifying the sugar, and removing it afterwards to the general store room, from whence it is sent to the market.

"The arroba of 25lb. sells in Mexico for about three dollars, or two dollars and a half, if not of the best quality. The great haciendas expend in wages to the workmen and other current charges, from 800 to 1200 dollars a week.

"It often happens, however, that in a good year, the sale of the molasses alone is sufficient to defray this expense, so

that the sugar remains a clear profit.

"The distance from Cuernavaca to Cuantla, is about twenty-five miles, and, with the exception of a chain of mountains which separates the two valleys, the whole intervening space is richly cultivated.

"After passing through the village of Yantepec, which lies at the foot of the mountain, there is a constant succession of

haciendas, most of which appear admirably kept up.

"Nine of the most remarkable in the district of Cuantla produce each as much as 30,000 arrobas of sugar annually, and two of these from 40,000 to 50,000.

"The greatest part of the annual produce is sent to the capital, from whence it is distributed to the different provinces; muleteers, however, come direct from the interior.

"It is a curious fact, that an immense quantity of sugar is vearly remitted to Vera Cruz; not for exportation, but for the home consumption of a province which might produce sugar enough to supply all Europe, if it chose to turn to account the advantages with which nature has so richly endowed it.

"The most remarkable circumstance, however, is the total abolition of slavery in a district where such a mass of colonial fruits is produced, and the success with which the introduction of free labour has been attended; it is this which has induced me to lay these observations before His Majesty's Government, and to hope that they may be esteemed not wholly unworthy of its attention.

(Signed) "H. G. WARD."

The case of the French colonies, in which the slaves were made free at the time of the French revolution, is completely in point. In Cayenne their enfranchisement was attended with no ill consequences*: after their emancipation the negroes in general continued voluntarily upon the plantations of their former masters, and no irregularities whatever were committed by those men who had thus suddenly acquired their freedom.

In Guadaloupe (where the disproportion of blacks to whites is at least as great as in our own colonies) the conduct of the freed negroes was equally satisfactory. In 1793, liberty was proclaimed universally to the slaves in that island; and during their ten years of freedom (though the metropolitan state would have been then unable to control any insurrectionary movement) their governors bore testimony to their regular industry and uninterrupted submission to the laws.

Of the conduct of the emancipated slaves in St. Domingo

a more particular account can be given ...

"In 1793, Santhonax and Polverel (commissioners sent by the Conventional Assembly to St Domingo) issued a proclamation at Cape Francis, by which they promised to give freedom to all the blacks who were willing to range themselves under the banners of the republic. usually called the proclamation of Santhonax: the result of it was, that a considerable number of slaves came in and were enfranchised. In September in the same year, Polverel

* Voyage à la Guiane, &c. cap. ii.

† The following account is abridged from Mr. CLARKSON's Thoughts, &c.

p. 20.

[†] Appendix to the Substance of the Debate of the House of Commons, on the 15th May, 1823, p. 146. See also VICTOR HUGUES' Official Reports to the French Government.

drew up a proclamation which extended emancipation to the whole island, and put it into circulation. In February, 1794, the Conventional Assembly of France passed a decree for the abolition of slavery throughout the whole of the French colonies."

I shall now inquire how those who were liberated conducted themselves after this change in their situation. With respect to those emancipated by Santhonax in the north, I do not find in the various histories I have seen any thing particular to communicate. Of those who were emancipated in the south and west, by the proclamation of Polverel, we are enabled to give a very pleasing account. Colonel Malenfant, who was resident in the island at the time, has made us acquainted with their general conduct and character: -" After this public act of emancipation," says he (by Polverel), "the negroes remained quiet both in the south and in the west; and they continued to work upon all the plantations*. There were estates indeed which had neither owners nor managers resident upon them, for some of these had been put into prison by Montbrun, and others, fearing the same fate, had fled to the quarter which had just been given up to the English. Yet upon these estates, though abandoned, the negroes continued their labours where there were any even inferior agents to guide them; and on those estates where no white men were left to direct them they betook themselves to the planting of provisions; but upon all the plantations where the whites resided the blacks continued to labour as quietly as before." A little further on in the work, ridiculing the notion entertained in France that the negroes would not work without compulsion, Colonel Malenfant takes occasion to allude to other negroes who had been liberated by the same proclamation, but who were more immediately under his own eye and cognizance. "If," says he, "you will take care not to speak to them of their return to slavery, but talk to them about their liberty, you may with this latter word chain them down to their labour. How did Toussaint succeed? How did I succeed also before his time in the plain of the Cul de Sac, on the plantation Gourand, more than eight months after liberty had been granted (by Polverel) to the slaves? Let those who knew me at that time, and even the blacks themselves, be asked. They will all reply that not a single negro upon that plantation, consisting of more than 450 labourers, refused to work; and yet this plantation was thought to be under the worst discipline, and the slaves the most idle of any in the plain. I

myself inspired the same activity into three other plantations of which I had the management." Such was the conduct of the negroes for the first nine months after their liberation, or up to the middle of 1794. Let us see how they conducted themselves after this period. During the year 1795 and part of 1796 I can learn nothing about them, though I have ransacked the French historians for this purpose. Had any thing, however, occurred in the way of outrage, we should have heard of it. And here let me take this opportunity of setting my readers right, if, from not knowing the date of occurrences, they should have connected the outrages which assuredly took place in St. Domingo in 1791 and 1792, with the effects of the emancipation of the slaves. The great massacres and conflagrations which at that time made so frightful a picture in the history of this unhappy island occurred in the days of slavery, before the proclamations of Santhonax and Polverel. They had been occasioned too not originally by the slaves themselves, but by quarrels between the white and coloured planters and between the royalists and the revolutionists, who for the purpose of wreaking their vengeance upon each other called in the aid of the slaves. I come now to the latter part of the year 1796, and here happily a clew is furnished me by which I have an opportunity of pursuing my inquiry. We shall find that from this time there was no want either of industry or of obedience in those who had been emancipated, they maintained on the contrary a respectable character. Let us appeal first to Malenfant. "The colony," says he, "was flourishing under Toussaint, the whites lived happily and in peace upon their estates, and the negroes continued to work for them." Toussaint came into power a little before the end of the year 1796, and remained in power till the year 1802, or till the invasion of the island by the French expedition of Buonaparte under Leclerc. Malenfant means therefore to state that, during a period of six years, the planters or farmers kept possession of their estates; that they lived upon them peaceably, without interruption or disturbance; and that the negroes, though they had been all set free, continued to be the labourers. Can there be any account more favourable to our views than this, after so sudden an emancipation?

I may appeal next to General Lacroix, who published his "Memoirs for a History of St Domingo," in 1819. He informs us that when Santhonax, who had been recalled to France by the Government, returned to the colony in 1796, he was astonished at the state in which he found it on his return. This, Lacroix says, "was owing to Toussaint, who

while he had succeeded in establishing perfect order and discipline among the black troops, had succeeded also in making the black labourers return to the plantations, there to resume the drudgery of cultivation." The same author tells us that in the next year 1797 the most wonderful progress had been made in agriculture. "The colony," says he, "marched as by enchantment towards its ancient splendour; cultivation prospered; every day produced perceptible proof of its progress. The city of the Cape and the plantations of the north rose up again visibly to the eye." The next witness to whom I shall appeal is the estimable General Vincent, who now lives at Paris. He was a general of brigade of artillery in St. Domingo; he was stationed there during the time both of Santhonax and Toussaint; he was also a proprietor of estates in the island. In the year 1801 he was called upon by Toussaint to repair to Paris to lay before the Directory the new constitution which had been agreed upon in St. Domingo. He arrived in France just at the moment of the peace of Amiens: here he found, to his inexpressible surprise and grief, that Buonaparte was preparing an armament for the purpose of restoring slavery in St. Domingo. He lost no time in seeing the first consul, and remonstrated against the expedition; he stated, that it was totally unnecessary and therefore criminal, for that every thing was going on well in St. Domingo. The proprietors were in peaceable possession of their estates; cultivation was making a rapid progress; the blacks were industrious, and beyond example happy. He conjured him therefore in the name of humanity not to reverse this beautiful state of things; but his efforts were ineffectual.

Having brought my examination into the conduct of the negroes after their liberation down to 1802, the time of the invasion of the island by Leclerc, I must now leave a blank of nearly two years, or till the year 1804. It cannot be expected during a war, in which every man was called to arms to defend his own personal liberty and that of his family, that we should see plantations cultivated as quietly as before, or even cultivated at all. But this was not the fault of the emancipated negroes, but of their former masters. Accustomed to look down upon the negroes as an inferior race of beings, they could not bear, peaceably as these had conducted themselves, to come into that familiar contact with them as free labourers which the change of their situation required. In an evil hour they prevailed upon Buonaparte, by false representations, to undertake to restore things to their former state: the expedition arrived upon the shores of St. Domingo. At length however the French were

driven from the island. Till that time the planters had retained their property, and then it was, and not till then, that they lost their all. In the year 1804 Dessalines was proclaimed emperor of this fine territory. In process of time a great part of the black troops were disbanded, and returned to cultivation. As they were free when they became soldiers, so they continued to be free when they became labourers again. From that time to this there has been no want of subordination or industry among them. They or their descendants are the persons by whom the plains and valleys of St. Domingo are still cultivated, and they are reported to follow their occupation with as fair a character as other free labourers in any other quarter of the globe. We have now seen how the emancipated negroes of St. Domingo have used their liberty during a period of thirty years. Will any one say that this case is not analogous to that which we have in view? Let us remember that the number of slaves liberated by the French decrees in St. Domingo was little short of 500,000 persons. But if there be a want of analogy, the difference is in my favour. I maintain that emancipation in St. Domingo was attended with far more hazard to persons and property, and with far greater difficulties, than it need be if attempted in our own islands. By the decree of Polverel the slaves were made free at once—in a single day. No notice was given of the event, and of course no preparation could be made for it. They were released suddenly from all their former obligations and restraints. Again, can we forget the unfavourable circumstances in which the slaves of St. Domingo were placed for a year or two before their liberation, in another point of view? The island at this juncture was a prev to political discord, civil war, and foreign invasion. The slave-owners were politically at variance with each other, as they were white or coloured persons, or republicans or royalists. They were quarrelling and fighting with each other, and shedding each others blood. The slaves unfortunately had been taught to imbibe the political animosities, and to take the side of their respective masters, and had been familiarized to scenes of violence and bloodshed. Who then will affirm that there could be any thing like the danger and difficulties in emancipating the slaves in our own colonies which existed when the slaves of St. Domingo were made free?"

To Mr. Clarkson's account I will add a few additional extracts from M. Malenfant's work, describing the conduct of the emancipated negroes, and showing what he thought would be the good effects of allowing them to retain their

freedom. M. Malenfant must be considered to be well qualified by experience to form a judgment on matters in which the negroes are concerned, as he says*, "I have lived amongst the blacks under the system of slavery; I have lived amongst them under that of liberty; I have seen them in the French, English, Dutch, and Spanish colonies. In all these countries I have studied their character, their manners, their customs: it is by living amongst them, by directing their agricultural labours, and commanding them in war, that I have learned to know them." Though M. Malenfant was kindly disposed toward the negroes, he cannot be suspected of any prejudice or undue bias in their favour, as it was a part of his plan that negroes should continue to be imported from Africa into the island as long as the slave trade was allowed to exist.

His wish (on account of his own interest as a proprietor as well as for other reasons) was to persuade the French Government not to attempt to restore slavery in St. Domingo; he drew up a plan which he presented to the Government, of which the principle was, that the workpeople should have a fourth of the produce; but much of what he says on the subject applies with equal force to the plan of giving wages. He expresses a strong conviction that the negroes would behave with propriety, and discourage disorderly conduct amongst their own body: he says, "Under the old regime they worked from five in the morning till night +. While making the sugar they worked also all night and never complained, though they saw the whip always ready to strike them if they were a moment unemployed, or showed a wish to rest. At their dinner hour they ran to their little gardens, and worked in them with ardour till they returned to their work on the plantation: and when moonlight allowed them to cultivate their ground in the evening they took advantage of it. From these things I concluded (and experience, since they have obtained their liberty, has proved the truth of my conclusions), that if they were allowed a fourth of the produce, they would employ their time with so much industry that the proprietorst instead of losing by the change, would gain considerably. I am so persuaded that the re-establishment of the colony depends on allowing a portion of the profits to the labourerst, and that this plan will not be injurious to the interest of the proprietors, that I engage to raise on any four plantations of the Cul-de-Sac that shall be selected,

^{*} Des Colonies, p. 127. † Idem, p. 133.

with the same number of people as before the revolution, a twelfth part more produce than was raised on them in 1789, and without fatiguing the people so much. I am certain also that the people would be happy and satisfied. In the time of slavery it is well known that the field negroes were very zealous in taking care of their masters' property, which they looked on as their own, for they always said, 'our plantation,' and yet these negroes had no other rewards than stripes of the whip and excessive labour*. Now they will take care of their patrons' property with more zeal than when they were slaves; interest will join with habit in attaching them to the plantation by which they are supported, and on which they are born. I am convinced the blacks do not require the whip to make them work, since some planters seldom make use of it; I am proud of having been of that number; and certainly on all the plantations of which I have had the care I raised more produce than my predecessors. I know the negroes so well, that I can assert that they would be the first to procure the punishment of the refractory. After the time that the slaves were emancipated, two negroes of bad character on the plantation Gouraud were informed against by their companions, who obliged me to send them to the chain at Port-au-Prince. When I said that they might reform, 'No, no,' they replied, 'the good God has made them such as they are, they cannot alter; they bring discredit on the Gouraud negroes, they are two great thieves.' They took them to the chain. Such is the spirit of all the plantations: you all know it, proprietary colonists! I saw at Cape St. François, in the year 4, some blacks sent to the chain for having stolen some piastres from their employers+. Their companions said to them, when they were brought before Telemachus, a negro magistrate, 'Citizen Telemachus does right in punishing you; when people are paid they ought not to steal.' When the whites were driven away from the plantation Garesché in the time of the troubles, the negroes set at liberty one of their companions who had been imprisoned for stealing. They gave him a hut and a little garden, but in two days time he had taken again to stealing, on which they immediately sent him again to the chain. All the negroes have these sentiments of justice; the colonists know that they have.

If all the negroes had come from Africa within six months;; if they had the love of independence that the

Indians have, I should own that my plan is an ideal one, impossible to be put in execution, and that force must be employed; but 99 out of 100 of the blacks are aware that without labour they cannot procure the things which are necessary for them; that there is no other method of satisfying their wants and their tastes. They know that they must work; they wish to do so, and they will do so."

The following account of the character and condition of the negroes of Hayti, at a later period, is given by Mr. Harvey*, who during the latter part of the reign of Christophe spent a considerable time at Cape François, the capital of his dominions. He says:-"I had thus a favourable opportunity of observing the condition of the natives in general, of marking the peculiarities of their character, and of witnessing the plans which had been established with a view to their improvement. At that place resided the principal men in the Havtian government, both of the civil and military departments; occasional interviews with some and frequent communications with others, enabled me to form a tolerably correct estimate of their talents, and to procure many important particulars respecting their country. Through my acquaintance with several European and American merchants who had lived many years in different parts of the island, I was furnished with accounts of such circumstances as had occurred during their residence there. By personal observation therefore, and by frequent conversation with the natives and white residents, I procured considerable information concerning the Haytians, from the period of their emancipation up to the time of my arrival; and I was thus furnished with more satisfactory answers to such inquiries as naturally suggest themselves concerning a free and independent body of negroes than could be collected from the occasional notices of their state, which appeared in periodicals and gazettes; or from any history that has been written respecting them.

"The inhabitants of Christophe's territories at this period may be divided into four classes: the nobility and officers, all of whom were proprietors—the soldiers—the tradespeople and mechanics—and the cultivators. The latter, who formed the great mass of the population, resided on or near the plantations on which they were appointed to labour. A great proportion of them were engaged in cultivating the estates of the King—if soldiers, they were fed and clothed at the King's expense—if regular cultivators, they received such a share of the produce as was fully adequate to yield them a competent maintenance. Others were in the employ

of the nobles and officers, who, receiving either stated wages or such a portion of the articles they cultivated as was deemed a sufficient reward for their industry, were equally supplied with whatever could contribute to their comfort and happiness. And those who by their exertions and economy were enabled to procure small spots of land of their own, or to hold the smaller plantations at an annual rent, were diligently engaged in cultivating coffee, sugar, and other articles; which they disposed of at moderate prices to the inhabitants of the adjacent towns and villages.

"It was an interesting sight to behold this class of the Haytians, now in possession of their freedom, coming in groups to the market nearest which they resided, bringing the produce of their industry for sale; and afterwards returning, carrying back the necessary articles of living which the disposal of their commodities had enabled them to purchase; all evidently cheerful and happy. Nor could it fail to occur to the mind of a spectator properly concerned in the welfare of negroes, that their present condition furnished the most satisfactory answer to that objection to the

general emancipation of slaves, founded on their alleged unfitness to value and improve the benefits of liberty. "While the interior of the island was in this improving

state, and its inhabitants were peaceful and industrious, Cape François and the other towns in Christophe's dominions presented scenes of the utmost order and activity; the great majority of the inhabitants of Cape François consisted of tradespeople and mechanics, the former of whom were supplied by the resident merchants with cloths, linens, silks, and other manufactures, which they sold to the natives in small quantities at prices sufficiently moderate. Their business was seldom so great as to engross all their time, nor its profits such as to enable them to amass fortunes, but it afforded them ample means of support; and what always appeared a great consideration with Haytians, it allowed them the leisure they desired for indulging in their favourite amusements. Towards strangers who entered their shops, whether for the purpose of making purchases or not, they were invariably and remarkably civil; a trait in the character of Christophe's subjects which I believe to have been universal. The mechanics also, of whom there was now a considerable number, were never at a loss for employment; and though many of them were deficient in skill, from having been imperfectly instructed, they were all enabled by their industry to gain a competent maintenance.

"On the whole, the scene which Cape François presented at this period was as interesting as it was in many respects

surprising. In few places of commerce could there be seen greater regularity in the dispatch of business, greater diligence displayed by those engaged in it, or more evident marks of a prosperous state of things. Every man had some calling to occupy his attention; instances of idleness or intemperance were of rare occurrence; the most perfect subordination prevailed, and all appeared contented and happy. So striking in short was their improvement that a foreigner would have found it difficult to persuade himself, on his first entering the place, that the people he now beheld so submissive, industrious, and contented, were the same who a few years before had escaped from the shackles

of slavery.

"Respecting the industry of the Haytians it may be proper to be somewhat more explicit; for since it is frequently affirmed that indolence forms one of the most conspicuous traits in the character of negroes while slaves, it becomes a question of some interest, whether the same disposition be equally prevalent among them when in possession of their liberty. As it regards the subjects of Christophe, their emancipation (though effected under many unfavourable circumstances) had subsequently wrought a change in their general habits, no less beneficial to themselves as individuals than important to their security and prosperity as a people. At the era of their liberty and independence they perceived that their support, and, if they possessed any sparks of ambition, their advancement, whether as soldiers or cultivators, depended wholly on their own exertions. Objects were placed before them calculated to awaken their ambition and excite them to diligence; not merely the establishment of their freedom and independence, but wealth, influence, and distinction. They felt the force of motives unknown to them during their slavery, which together with the regulations to which they have been subject, have effected a degree of improvement in their character beyond what their original condition afforded the least ground to expect. Though of the same race, and possessing the same general traits of character as the negroes of the other West Indian Islands, they are already distinguished from them by habits of industry and activity such as slaves are seldom known to exhibit. As they would not suffer, so they do not require the attendance of one acting in the capacity of a driver with the instrument of punishment in his hand.

"As far as I had an opportunity of ascertaining, from what fell under my own observation and from what I gathered from other European residents, I am persuaded of one general fact, which on account of its importance I shall

state in the most explicit terms, viz:-that the Haytians employed in cultivating the plantations, as well as the rest of the population, perform as much work in a given time as they were accustomed to do during their subjection to the French. When it is considered that in the time of their slavery the fear of punishment was their chief incentive to labour-that their proceedings during the struggle for liberty, so far from being calculated to subdue any previous disposition to idleness, were adverse to the cultivation of orderly and industrious habits—that at the era of their emancipation they were far from a state of civilization—and that the period which has since elapsed is comparatively short—this fact, trifling as it may at first appear, becomes in no small degree surprising. And if we may judge of their future improvement by the change which has been already effected, it may be reasonably anticipated that Hayti will ere long contain a population not inferior in their industry to that of any civilized nation in the world."

The result of the preceding investigation of the negro character and of the conduct and circumstances of emancipated negroes appears to be, that if judicious measures were adopted to guard against the inconveniences which might arise during the immediate change, the slaves might without delay be raised to the condition of free men, with advantage to themselves and with safety to the white in-

habitants of the colonies.

But if there are any insuperable obstacles to their being immediately made free, it is incontrovertibly true that they ought to be placed without delay in the best situation they are now capable of filling, and in that which is the best calculated to raise them to a state in which they shall be fit for complete freedom. Now it cannot be denied that they are at present fit for a state superior to that of slavery, if not for such a degree of liberty as their fellow-subjects enjoy; nor can it be denied that slavery is a state particularly ill calculated to qualify them for the possession of freedom.

It must surely therefore be acknowledged by all who submit unreservedly to the dictates of truth and justice, that the negroes ought to be immediately delivered from the condition of slavery, and to be put in possession of that degree of liberty, whatever it may be, for which they are now qualified. It is also certain that if it is necessary that they should be for a short period subject in some degree to the authority of individuals, it ought not to be under that of persons who have already oppressed them, nor of persons who may in future find it or think it their interest to oppress them: that is to say, they ought not to be left during

this preparatory period under the control of their present masters, nor placed under that of the persons for whom they are to labour; but they ought to be placed under the authority of persons who have not been and are not in any other relation to them that than of governors and guardians.

I will conclude with an extract from a late publication*, which in a striking manner demonstrates the absurdity of leaving the negroes in slavery to their masters, in order to

prepare them for the possession of freedom.

"If it be true, as the advocates for gradual abolition affirm, that the slaves are not prepared for the freedom to which it is proposed ultimately to restore them, this furnishes an argument much stronger on our side of the question than on theirs. For to what is the alleged want of preparation to be ascribed? Either to the treatment which the slaves have actually received, or to the nature of the system itself under which they have been placed. On the former supposition, the masters are represented as so regardless of what is due to the moral cultivation of their slaves, so guilty of a course of oppression towards them, so little careful to gain their respect and esteem, that the slaves would refuse to work for their own maintenance, or they would gratify their passions by violence and plunder. According to the accounts given of these masters, they are with few exceptions of the very best description; and yet they have continued to keep their slaves in this state of ignorance and barbarism, and unfitness for liberty, when they could not fail to be sensible that it was the great cause of preventing the measure of emancipation from being carried; and when it constituted the principal argument which was employed against it by themselves and their friends! Surely to wait till persons who have hitherto been so negligent of what was their obvious duty, and who are clearly interested in never performing that duty effectually, shall train their slaves for the complete liberation which they are said to be unqualified to enjoy, is to manifest a degree of simplicity which every man of common understanding would blush to own. The masters have never yet been persuaded, and they cannot be compelled to prepare themselves for freedom; yet it is under their management that this preparation must be effected, and therefore the case may be fairly considered as hopeless. On the other supposition, the conclusion is still stronger and more indisputable. If the system has wrought such degradation in the principles and feelings and character

^{*} Appendix to a Sermon on Slavery, by the Rev. Dr. A. THOMSON, published by the Anti-Slavery Society.

of those who have been subjected to it that they cannot be trusted with the exercise of liberty, and if it has produced this effect upon them in spite of the boasted humanity, and in spite of the interested motives by which we have been told all such evils are necessarily prevented, whence arises the expectation, that at any future period it will have a different influence and an opposite result? The unfitness for emancipation originating in the very nature and operation of slavery, it is a contradiction and absurdity to say that the slavery and the unfitness can ever be disjoined. It is an irresistible inference from such a proposition that a slave can never be qualified for the deliverance which is desiderated, and therefore that he never can be made free."

NOTES.

A.

Justly does Mr. Stephen deny the right of appealing to the economical prudence of the country against its honour and its conscience. "To the moral rights of the slave," he says, "it is just as valid a bar, as a plea of associated robbers would be against making restitution to the injured party that it would require a contribution from the gang. Even this illustration is inadequate; for the question here is not merely whether we shall restore, but whether, as the alternative, we shall add wrong to wrong, inflicting the same calamities on generations yet unborn, and enslaving the offspring lest we should have to pay for the redemption of the parent."

В.

The expense of recovering runaways appears to be very great. Mr. Fitzmaurice, in his printed letter to the East India Directors, says, "that runaways and their hunters amount to one in fifteen in Jamaica." Moreton, speaking of the same island, says, "that they are often one in ten." From the Privy Council's Report, it appears that in St. Kitt's "almost every plantation keeps two or more of the most trusty slaves as hunters, constantly searching the mountains for runaways. In some plantations the number of runaways often amounts to one-tenth of the whole, or perhaps a fifth part of the working slaves. Gangs of ten and upwards sometimes run away from one plantation from a few days to above twelve months." Dr. Dickson, who gives these statements and other similar ones, adds, "I had in my possession a Jamaica newspaper, in which are advertised a hundred and thirty runaways. The cruel waste of property from the sufferings of the runaways is not foreign to this statement, nor the 43 shillings sterling paid for taking each runaway advertised; the shilling for every mile they are brought; the expense of advertising and of their maintenance; and the fees paid in gaol or in the cage, when they are delivered to their owners."

C.

One proof of this assertion is afforded by the experiments made by Mr. Steele on his estate in Barbadoes, of which an account is given in Dr. Dickson's Mitigation of Slavery. Mr. Steele found that eighteen negroes working in the common manner did not do so much in a given time as six had performed of the like sort of work a few days before when working by piece-work. He found this plan so successful, that in 1785 he made task-work on the voluntary system the general practice of the estate. In 1789 he went still further, and made all his adult male slaves copyholders, and introduced the practice of rent and wages. In the year 1790, about a year after the latter part of his plan had been put to trial, he said, in a letter to Dr. Dickson, "My copyholders have succeeded beyond my expectations." He died in the beginning of the next year, so that we can only know how that part of the plan succeeded during one year, but that the previous parts of his plan, the introducing task-work and abolishing arbitrary punishment (see the following note) were profitable to himself as well as advantageous to the slave is fully proved by Mr. Steele's own statements. "I have employed and amused myself," said he, " by introducing an entire new mode of governing my own slaves, for their happiness and also for my own profit:" and when he was examined before the Privy Council, he declared that, after his change in the manner of governing his slaves, "the annual nett clearance of his estate was above three times more than it had been for ten years before."

D.

Mr. Steele says:-" I took, in 1783, the whips and all power of arbitrary punishment from all the overseers and their white servants, but at the same time I created a magistracy out of the negroes themselves, and appointed a Court or Jury of the older negroes or head men, for trial and punishment of all casual offences (and these courts were always to be held in my presence or in that of my new superintendent), which Court very soon grew respectable. Seven of these men being of the rank of drivers in their different departments, were also constituted rulers or magistrates over all the gangs, and were charged to see at all times that nothing should go wrong in the plantations; but that on all necessary occasions they should assemble, and consult together how any such wrong should be immediately rectified; and I made it known to all the gangs that the authority of these rulers shall supply the absence or vacancy of an overseer in all cases; they making daily or occasional reports of all occurrences to the proprietor or his delegate, for his approbation or his orders." The result of this plan was highly

satisfactory to Mr. Steele. In the year 1,88 he spoke of it thus :- " A plantation of between seven and eight hundred acres has been governed by fixed laws and a negro court for about five years with great success. In this plantation no overseer or white servant is allowed to lift his hand against a negro, nor can he arbitrarily order a punishment. Fixed laws and a court or jury of their peers keep all in order without the ill effect of sudden and intemperate passions." Negroes have likewise been found efficient jurymen at Sierra Leone. The late Chief Justice of the colony, in a letter to the secretary of the Church Missionary Society, adduces the advantageous employment of liberated Africans as jurors in proof of the great and rapid improvement which they had made. He writes :- "At the colonial sessions holden in December, 1821, I inquired of Mr. Johnson whether any of the inhabitants of Regent's Town were qualified to serve on juries, and I intimated that if there were any so qualified it would be proper to call upon them to perform that duty in conjunction with the inhabitants of Freetown. Mr. Johnson named two or three of his people as being fully qualified, and one of them took his turn as a juror on several trials. A similar intimation was given to Mr. During and Mr. Nylander; and subsequently persons from Gloucester and Kissey, recommended by those gentlemen, have served with perfect satisfaction to their fellow jurors. The results of the first experiments having proved satisfactory, the practice of calling the qualified inhabitants of the villages will be continued until they shall be trained and accustomed to take their share of the duty in regular proportion with the persons on the jury-list at Freetown.

FINIS.

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THOUGHTS

ON

BRITISH COLONIAL SLAVERY.

BY THE

REV. D. WILSON, VICAR OF ISLINGTON.*

It may be a question whether the contrariety between the Christian religion and West Indian Slavery has been sufficiently insisted upon. The inhumanity, the impolicy, the cruelty, the injustice, involved in our present slave-system, have been exposed; but, perhaps, not the directly antichristian spirit of it,-its opposition to all the principles and obligations of the religion of love. At least this view of it has not been dwelt upon with the force which its paramount importance demands. For if there be any one thing which characterises the religion of Christ, it is the tenderness which it inspires. Its foundations were laid in lovethe love of God, our heavenly Father, towards lost mankind—the love of Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord, in dying a sacrifice upon the cross for us. Even infidels allow that the meek and peaceful spirit of Christianity, and especially the character of our Lord, is pure and lovely. In fact, the distinguishing badge of the religion of Christ-that by which all men are to know that we are his disciples, is LOVE. It is the boast of Christianity that she has diffused a spirit of kindness amongst mankind-that she has mitigated the horrors of war-abolished the gladiatorial spectacles-ameliorated the treatment of captives-introduced hospitals and infirmaries for the sick-banished infanticide-improved the condition of the laborious classes - set apart one day in seven for the

^{*} The following able Article is extracted by permission of the Editor, from a work entitled "The Amulet, or Christian and Literary Remembrancer, for 1828."

repose of the body and the instruction of the mind—softened the administration of absolute governments—changed, in short, the aspect of the countries where it has prevailed.

How comes it to pass, then, that upon 800,000 subjects of the British empire, the most burdensome of all yokes should still be permitted to press? How comes it to pass that Christianity has not abolished the slavery in the West Indies, as it triumphed over the slavery established in the Roman Empire? The answer is, that Christianity has never been brought to bear upon the question in the way that it should, and that it must, before the evil will be abated. Christians have not yet fully considered the absolute unlawfulness of the present state of slavery to every man who calls himself by the name of Christ.

It was late in the eighteenth century before the public attention was effectually called to the condition of our slaves, and the horrors of the traffic by which their numbers were supplied. The first great object of the friends of Africa was to obtain the abolition of the trade itself. During the twenty years exhausted in that contest, the attention of the public was not directed so immediately to the opposition of slavery to the Christian religion, as to the atrocities of the trade between Africa and the West Indies-to the terrific cruelties of the middle passage-to the miseries of the captivity in which it terminated—to the impolicy of pursuing so fatal a traffic-to the beneficial effects which its abolition might produce on the condition of the slaves. Much time was also of necessity consumed in establishing, by irresistible evidence, the facts on which the various parts of the case rested. It has only been within the last five years that the attention of parliament has been called, distinctly, to the question of the mitigation and gradual abolition of West Indian Slavery itself. The time is still more recent since it has been established by undeniable facts, that no material improvement of the system of slavery can be expected from the slave farmers and the colonial assemblies in the West Indies. Now, at length, the whole case stands out clear and prominent. The solemn act of justice which is to vindicate the oppressed and injured African race, must proceed from the mother country-from the general feelings of Englishmen-from the effects of decided public sentiment upon the parliament and the government. Nor can this be brought about, except as the irreconcileable hostility of the Christian religion to the dreadful evil of negro slavery is fully and strongly shewn. This will awaken the public conscience. This will shake us from the torpor which is apt to creep upon the mind after we have become familiarized with the terms and statements of a great question.

Nothing then can be more directly contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity than the inhuman and horrible system of slavery. If one act of injustice, wilfully committed, is inconsistent with the character of a Christian, what must be ten thousand? If one injured and oppressed fellow-creature cries against us for redress to the Father of mercies, and cries not in vain, what will not the cry of thousands upon thousands effect? If an occasional deed of cruelty, prompted by passion, is a provocation in the eyes of a gracious Father, what must a cool, deliberate system of cruelty be? If crimes affecting the health or property of another, though ever so partially, be a breach of the divine commandments, what must injuries be, affecting the liberty—the whole future well-being—the family—the children—of hundreds of thousands of innocent fellow-creatures consigned to hopeless slavery?

Do we remember what are the plain broad facts of the case? Is it not unquestionable that the West Indian slaves now in our colonies, were obtained by the fraudulent and unjust rapacity of the slave traffic? Thus the first possession rests on an act of injustice, which every subsequent day of captivity continues and aggravates. The English slave owner has no more right, in the eye of religion, to retain in bondage the unoffending African, than an African slave-owner would have to retain a number of Englishmen, if he had made an incursion on our coast and had carried off our peasants with their wives and children. The poverty, the ignorance, the uncivilized state of Africa, its inability to cope with our force and detect our fraud, only aggravate our enormous guilt; and aggravate it in the exact ratio of our superior knowledge, attainments, power, and advancement in the arts of life.

What, again, are the facts as to the condition of these poor slaves, when landed on the West India Islands? Are they treated like men—like fellow-creatures—like brothers? Are they instructed in the Christian religion? Is the Sabbath allowed them as the day of repose and peace? Is the institution of marriage encouraged? Is their labour moderated by their strength? Are their chains softened and lightened by the general kindness of their masters? Are they placed under the equal protection of the laws? Are the tender bonds of domestic

charity respected and preserved? Do they make advances in religion, social order, happiness? Do their numbers increase according to the usual progress of population in other countries? The answer to every one of these questions, is—NO.

Our fellow-creatures, our brethren in blood, they are treated as beasts of burden—are delivered over to the absolute will of a slave-driver—are compelled, in gangs, to their daily work-to their excessive and overwhelming toil by the cart-whip-are exposed to punishments the most cruel and debasing, at the passion and caprice of another-are branded in the flesh with hot irons—are sold as goods and chattels for the payment of their masters' debts-are separated, the one part of their families from another, and sold to distant owners—are debarred from religious instructions by the Sabbath being the market day, and the chief time allotted for cultivating the patches of land by which they support themselves-marriage almost unknown-cruel punishments and overworking, especially in crop-time, with the constant effect of indiscriminate licentiousness, lessening their numbers—their testimony not received in courts of law—their possession of property unprotected—the purchase of their liberty made almost impossible! Thus man is the prey of man. The innocent African, first taken from the land of his fathers, is pursued by unrelenting barbarity through his shortened term of life, to a death unrelieved by the Christian's hope.

And all this is done by Englishmen—by the professors of that religion which says, Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them. And all this is done by those who acknowledge the Bible to be the word of God, who read the continual woes pronounced by the Prophets against those who oppress and do unjustly—woes which fill the sacred page, and which ended in the Babylonish captivity. All this is done by the followers of that Jesus who came to proclaim peace, and mercy, and love; who wept at the grave of Lazarus; who denounced his heaviest threatenings against the oppression and cruelties of the Scribes and Pharisees; and who accomplished his sacrifice upon the cross to redeem all mankind, and break down all differences of race, and teach us that in Christ Jesus there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

All this is done, again, by those who read the second great command-

ment of the law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; who join, in words in the prayer of the Psalmist, Let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before thee; who hear the Apostle's command, Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that you also have a master in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him-who hear his exhortation, Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep; Remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body-who hear him class men-stealers, with murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers-and who read his affectionate language concerning Onesimus, a run-away slave, whom he had begotten to the Christian faith at Rome, as not any longer a servant, but above a servant; a brother beloved, specially to me, says the Apostle to his correspondent Philemon, but how much more to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord; if thou count me therefore as a partner, receive him as myself.

All this is done, finally, by those who profess to believe that at the last solemn day, when masters and slaves will stand before the same tribunal of Christ, works of mercy will be especially produced as the proofs of faith and love.—For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

And what increases the guilt, all this is supported by a systematic opposition to reform in the Colonial assemblies—by an artful and industrious concealment and perversion of facts, false representations and colourable excuses—by a pertinacity and folly which the authority of the King and the resolutions of the British parliament in vain attempt to subdue; and by an infatuation, which bears along the West Indian body in blindly defending a system in open hostility with every principle of humanity, with every view of just policy, and with every dictate of religion. But this seems the natural effect of great crimes. Obduracy is the just infliction which follows habits of such a character.

It remains for a free and religious nation like England to look the dreadful evil in the face, and to devise the efficacious remedy.

I do not stay to answer the objection that the Christian religion tolerates such a slavery as prevails in our Colonies, because the Jewish law

modified the domestic bondage of early times, and stripped it of its most fearful characteristics—an objection which is the strongest possible confutation of itself. Nor do I condescend to refute the cavil, that, because the Apostles enjoined obedience on the first converts who were of the class of slaves, and commanded them to be faithful to their masters, (which Christianity now does, oppressed as the negro slave is,) therefore the injunctions of mercy, and justice, and kindness, on masters and princes, and legislators, (which would at once unloose the chains which we so much abhor) are null and void! Nor can I with patience hear the unworthy sophism, that because Christianity and some sort of bondage have co-existed since the first promulgation of the gospel, therefore, the most cruel and inhuman species of slavery ever known, admits of apology as not inconsistent with the Christian faith. Christianity is indignant at such an insinuation. As well might all the vices and evils which have co-existed with Christianity because men have not received and obeyed her precepts, be imputed to her as their defender and patron.

No; the only real patron of West Indian Slavery, is torpor and selfishness of heart, false views of policy, fear of the power and wealth of the West Indian body, the revenue—the blood-stained revenue—raised from the importation of Colonial produce—the ignorance in which our carelessness leaves so many Englishmen of the horrid facts of the case—and the backwardness of man to discharge a duty towards an absent and unprotected class of sufferers.

But these subterfuges are fast disappearing. The public mind is more and more aroused. The indignation of a generous people will not suffer much longer the greatest instance of oppression to go unredressed. The rising principles of true Christianity will pervade our legislature and our government. The fear of the divine wrath for a great national sin, will overbalance the false fears of man, and the false calculations of a short-sighted policy. England will awake to its duty. All due consideration, indeed, will be given to the actual situation of our slave population, and the just interests of the slave owners and merchants; but the main duty of mitigating the condition of the present generation, and preparing for the manumission of the next, will be efficaciously discharged. And the country, which is multiplying its missions, and circulating its bibles ABROAD, will no longer be reproached with the mon-

strous inconsistency of neglecting nearly a million of its subjects in its own colonies AT HOME.

So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter, Eccl. iv. 1.

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works? Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

ISLINGTON, AUGUST, 1827.

DEATH WARRANT

OF

NEGRO SLAVERY

THROUGHOUT

THE BRITISH DOMINIONS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY FOR THE MITIGATION AND GRADUAL ABOLITION

OF SLAVERY THROUGHOUT THE BRITISH DOMINIONS.

SOLD BY J. HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY; AND BY
J. AND A. ARCH, CORNHILL.

1829.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The title we have given to the present pamphlet will possibly surprise some of our readers, departing as it does from the measured tone we have usually employed. But let them not suppose that this altered tone indicates any change of character or purpose. The change is not in us, but in the circumstances in which we stand; and the effect of these circumstances a very few words will suffice to explain.

A year ago, we were far from sanguine in our expectations of an early extinction of Slavery. On the contrary, our hopes were low. They have risen since that time; and therefore we feel it incumbent on us, as honest men, to avow the change without reserve or hesitation. We are looking forward, we admit, at the present moment, to a much earlier, and, through the Divine favour, a more auspicious, termination of our labours, than we ventured to anticipate twelve months ago.

Do any of our readers wish to know the grounds of this revolution in our views? We will give them without reserve. The change has been slow, gradual, and progressive. But the result is, that, instead of our previous despondency (the fruit of those blighted hopes that sicken the heart); we now entertain a confidence,—which, we trust to shew, is sober, rational, and justifiable,—of early, final, and complete success.

1. To those who take an interest in the question, and who have followed its progress for some years past, as it may be traced in the pages of the Anti-Slavery Reporter—(and it is only such whom we can expect either to ask, or to listen to our reasons)—we would say, in the first place; Look back to the following Numbers of that work: namely, No. XL., XLI., XLII., XLIII., XLIV. and its Supplement, No. XLV., XLVII., XLVII., XLVIII., XLVIII., XLVIII., XLIII., LII., LII., and LIII.; making in all about

twenty Numbers.—Of these, however, it would be necessary to read not more than about two hundred pages of letter-press, at the expense of about five or six hours of time at the utmost;—a sacrifice which, on such a subject, those who feel an interest in it will not be unwilling to incur. They will then be in a capacity to understand the indications to which we shall now point.

By referring, in the first place, on the subject of Sugar Duties, to No. XLIX. p. 15; No. LI. pp. 36—38; No. LII. pp. 78—80; and to the whole of No. LIII. it will be seen that the state of our prospects, and the concurrent improvement of public feeling and effort, are most materially, and even radically, altered on that vital part of our whole case; we mean, the Slave-holders' monopoly; the paupers' fund for sugar planters; and the absolute and universal freedom of trade, which, of itself, must prove the death of Slavery.

By referring, in the second place, to No. XLIII. pp. 341, 350, 354, 362, 367—370; to No. XLVII. pp. 462—468; to No. XLIX. pp. 1, 10, 15, 30, 31; to No. LII. pp. 53—58, 61, 64, and 70—74, no one can fail to perceive such an altered tone in those whose fiat would of itself, even if public opinion were silent, decide the question; that he must feel that, when they shall be duly aided and supported and urged forward by it, no more doubt can be entertained of their success, than we can doubt, that six months ago—in the face of difficulties infinitely more insurmountable; and an opposition very far more formidable, than can now be apprehended—an emancipation was achieved of ten times the extent and difficulty of that now sought for.

Out of Parliament at least, the numerical amount of the opponents in the former case, as compared with the present, must have been ten thousand to one; while the object to be gained, involved interests at least twenty times more important and vital; big, in the apprehensions of millions, with the most dangerous and disastrous consequences; and yet presenting to the eye of the national conscience not half the heart-stirring obligations to prompt and energetic decision, which the present case involves.

Government and Parliament are called, not to expunge from the statute-book some enactments of dubious policy, about which good men have differed, and do now differ. But they are called to put down a crime, which has lost nothing of its original malignity by the lapse of ages; but has become more highly aggravated in its guilt by the light recently poured upon it. A crime, did we say?—Nay, a series, and complication of crimes—proceeding daily and hourly before our eyes,—in the name and under the authority of the British Sovereign; supported by his troops, and paid for by the money of his people;—a series of crimes, any one of which, if perpetrated in this country, would call for the gibbet and the executioner to do their duty on the felons and murderers whom we are at this very moment protecting and cherishing.

But, thirdly, we would refer our readers to another series of passages in the same Reporter, which seem, in the actual infatuation of the defenders of this bloody and atrocious system, sufficiently to prove our position. The precursor of dissolution has already appeared.

Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.

The throes of approaching death are already on its victim, whose faltering speech and erring intellect seem to mark him as no longer an efficient and living member of the body politic.

What are the symptoms? Look only at the documents which the upholders and defenders of this mass of abomination have themselves supplied to the public, in their own unhappy case. Look back only for twelve or fifteen months. We will take no wider retrospect.

First, let us take individuals.

There is Lord Seaford; in all other points a man of sense and discernment; see him approach this subject!* Look next at Sir R. Farquhar+; Sir R. Woodford; Governor Grant§; General Nicolay||; Sir C. Brisbane**; Sir Lowry Cole++; Mr. Irving; and Mr. H. Gurney; MM. P. ‡‡; and, lastly, at Col. Young of Demarara, Protector of Slaves!§§

^{*} Anti-Slavery Reporter, vol. ii. No. XL. pp. 291-308.

[†] Ibid. Nos. XLII. XLIX. L. and LI. | Ibid. No. XLIII. pp. 353, 354.

[§] Ibid. p. 345; and No. XLVII. p. 462—468. I Ibid. vol. iii. No. LII. pp. 66, 67.

^{**} Ibid. pp. 75—77; and vol. ii. No. XLIII. p. 367.

^{††} Ibid. No. XLIII. p. 367; and vol. iii. No. LI. pp. 45-49.

tt Ibid. No. XLIX. pp. 5, 7. § Ibid. vol. ii. No. XLIII. pp. 355—358.

Look next at larger bodies of men:—at legislatures—nay, at whole communities of slave-holders. A few examples will suffice.

Look at the island of Jamaica, with Mr. Barret as their organ *; -at the Bahamas, with their governor at their head +; -at Bermuda ‡; at Nevis §; at Grenada ||. Look, again, at the planters of St. Lucia ¶; of Berbice **; of the Mauritius ++:-Nay, look at the collective wisdom of the whole West-India body, as exemplified in its writings which have recently appeared in this very city ##. And, as if there were no exception to the influence of this contagious stolidity of intellect, wherever slavery enters as an element; look, in the last place, to the many excellent men who compose the governors of the Christian societies for converting the Negro Slaves, and for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts. And we shall see even these venerated individuals, when they come in contact with the Antilles, at once yielding up, to their Creole or Creolized agents, the keeping, as it were, of their consciences, and the guidance and controul of their reason and their principles; and ranging themselves, unresistingly and unwittingly, on the side of falsehood, imposture, licentiousness, irreligion, and impiety §§.

What can we say to all this? Only what we have said. Of a system so supported, and producing such fruits, what can any man in his senses say,—who has read the book either of common sense, or of experience, or of Scripture;—but that, in the language of an ancient writer, it "decayeth and waxeth old, and is ready to vanish away?" (Heb. viii. 13).

This is our first reason. Our remaining reasons will not occupy an equal space.

^{*} Anti-Slavery Reporter, vol. ii. pp. 341-345; and p. 370.

[†] Ibid. vol. iii. No. LII. p. 64. § Ibid. vol. iii. No. LII. p. 65. | Ibid. vol. iii. No. LII. p. 65. | Ibid. p. 67.

[¶] Ibid. vol. ii. No. XLIII. p. 354.

^{**} Ibid. pp. 359—367.

†† Ibid. No. XLII.; and No. XLIII. p. 367; and No. XLIV.; and vol. iii.

No. LI. pp. 39—52.

Ibid. vol. ii. No. XLV. p. 432; and No. XLVI. p. 441—444; and vol.

iii. No. L. pp. 24—30; and No. LI. pp. 33—35. §§ Ibid, vol. ii. No. XLI.; Supplement to No. XLIV.; No. XLV. pp. 420—427, 469; No. XLVII. pp. 455—462; and No. XLVIII. pp. 469—488.

- 2. The second reason is, the manifest and unquestionable change which has taken place in the feelings and sympathies of the community. We will not look back with recollections which might tend to check the nascent zeal of the day, or to prevent those from joining us of whom we had long hoped better things; and who, though they ought to have been the first, have been among the last, (the most lukewarm and sluggish), in a cause where the duty of all who profess to love their Saviour, and to love their fellow-men without distinction of clime or colour as his and their brethren, and for his sake, yet have not done what they could or ought—to prove the sincerity of that profession.— But better times, we trust, are approaching; and we perceive, among some to whom we now allude, (of every name), a growing desire to redeem the time they have wasted in listening to vain and groundless fears and scruples and objections, wholly forgetful of their allegiance to Him of whom they boast as their rightful Lord; but whose cause they have hitherto deserted.
 - 3. At length, however, -after the endurance of two centuries of crime and blood; of torture inflicted under British authority; of broken hearts; of wasted lives; of coldness and indifference to every claim of humanity and justice ; -- we are now, as it were, starting from the sleep, or rather dream, of our own fancied goodness, and are reminded by conscience, that we have been wanting to the strongest obligations of heaven and earth, and are ourselves partakers in the foul crimes that have now been denounced; while we have been cherishing the idea of our spotless innocence and exemplary benevolence; of our religious light and of Christian perfection. The delusion, we trust, is at an end, and is dissipated for ever. In fact, we are, ourselves, as a nation, now on our defence, at a higher bar than that of man or of public opinion .- This is felt, and we trust will be felt, more and more every day that God spares us to prepare for our own great audit; and to account to him for our wasted opportunities of good.
 - 4. But, in the fourth place, Ireland is now alive to her obligations, and has added seven millions to our ranks. They claim for the Negro race an emancipation, to which they shew themselves

to be well entitled, by considering it as the first duty of grateful hearts to labour to impart to others the blessings of which they themselves have newly tasted. Ireland has not shared in our guilt; but she desires to assist in delivering us from its pollution and its punishment; and has begun the work of agitation, which, we may hope, will, in this case, soon produce similar effects to those which have now enabled her to buckle on her armour, and to raise her voice, (without one dissenting or discordant note from Episcopalians, Catholics, Presbyterians, Emancipatists, and Non-emancipatists), in favour of mercy, and humanity, and equal justice.

5. Nor is England without its parallel on a smaller scale. All, who know any thing of the subject, know, that one of the most effective and mischievous props of this foul system of crime and fraud and falsehood, was the Quarterly Review. It had attained a demi-official character; and knew how, with a wicked dexterity, to convert the influence thence derived to purposes of evil. For two or three years, (under the dictation of the Colonial Office, or of persons closely connected with it), it carried on a too successful warfare against truth and justice and humanity and honour; cheered on by the shouts of the Colonial Club.

In February 1823 (No. LV. p. 178), it commenced its war against the whole race of Abolitionists. In the following December (No. LVIII. p. 476), appeared its first grand attack upon the Anti-slavery Society; and from that hour it became, for three or four years, the favourite text-book of the West-Indian party at home, and of the more ferocious of the Colonial journals abroad.

Its first gallant effort was to attempt to degrade Mr. Wilberforce (p. 479) in the public opinion, at a time when that revered and cherished individual could no longer (as they well knew) use the eloquence from which they would have shrunk, to reduce their pitiful sneers and base taunts to their due insignificance.

This was followed by an article no less bitter, but still more disingenuous; and, what is more remarkable, no less faithless and injurious to the Government, they affected to serve, than to the slaves, to whom they also affected, with a most disgusting hypocrisy, to wish well.

This article put an end to the forbearance of those whom these hangers-on at the public offices had combined, with the Colonial Club, to make marks for the finger of scorn to point at. And, in two months, there appeared "a Review of this Quarterly Review;" or "an Exposure of the erroneous Opinions promulgated in that Work on the Subject of Colonial Slavery." Since that time, we do not recollect to have had our bile excited by one sentence from the pen of this writer.—Indeed, we should scarcely have known that he retained any vitality as to this question for four long years; had he not, in January last, given some signs of life and malignity (No. LXXVII. p. 181), by one of his savage growls at Sierra Leone. This colony had once been patronized by the Abolitionists. But for twenty-two long years it had been in the hands of the friends of these Reviewers, who, during that time (we speak before those who know the fact), had not only neither asked nor taken counsel as to its management, but had contrived to ruin it by their neglect, and then to throw the blame on those, whom they had declined to consult, and who had no more to do with its failure than the Great Mogul.

This, we say, was our erroneous conception of the state of this able, but uncandid and insidious, work; when, in April last, we were surprised by an incidental observation occurring, without rhyme or reason, at p. 343 of No. LXXVIII. The passage has been already quoted, but we will here quote it again.

"With regard to Jamaica, and some other of the West India Islands, which have their houses of assembly; their systematic opposition to every measure proposed by the King's government, considering the precarious situation in which they stand, appears to us to be little short of insanity. They seem not to know that they are tottering on the very brink of a volcano, which the first blast of a trumpet from St. Domingo would cause to explode, and bury in one common ruin, man, woman, and child. As it is, nothing but the King's armed force preserves them from destruction. And yet these silly people have been so unwise as to refuse to continue the supplies which they are bound to furnish to the troops who protect them; nay, even to throw out something of a

threat to sever themselves from the mother country, and seek for protection elsewhere. Is it possible that these people can for a moment forget that England protects them and their sugars at the expense of her other colonies? Do they not know, that, if she were to admit the sugars of the East Indies and the Mauritius" [Here we have a proof of ignorance, which makes us rejoice that their advocacy of our cause is confined to twenty lines] "on the payment of equal duties; or, still more effectually, if she were to levy a discriminating duty on West India sugar, the sun of their prosperity would immediately set? Let the House of Assembly look at these things, and desist in time from using or abusing its authority, by a vexatious opposition to his Majesty's Government."

Here, then, we have another sign of the times, and one which speaks volumes to those who are initiated.

6. But still more satisfactory is it to us to perceive an union of sentiment and of feeling in two other publications of the same description, the Edinburgh and the Westminster Reviews; which, though they have mutual collisions and complaints of their own, yet have waived them all, like the Catholics and Anti-Catholics of Ireland, in their overwhelming attachment to the interests of their common humanity.

Of this last position more directly;—but incidentally of every other to which we have adverted; we now proceed to furnish some proof.

Our first proof is an article extracted from the Edinburgh Review, of Oct. 1824, (No. LXXXII. p. 464, &c.), containing a review of Mr. Stephen's Delineation of Slavery in the West Indies, and which has already been five years before the public. That in that time it has produced, (notwithstanding the zealous activity of the Aberdeen Anti-Slavery Society,) so little fruit; we pretend not to explain, except by the torpor which, for a time, seemed to have seized, with a few rare exceptions, on all classes—in Parliament and out of Parliament; Churchmen and Dissenters; Whigs, Tories, and Radicals;—until the present day of brighter promise and of quickened energy has begun to dawn upon us.

We trust that the re-appearance of this article, at this moment, will make an impression more proportionate to its fair claims on the public attention.

The only material change it has undergone, has been to suppress some compliments to the West Indians resident in Great Britain; which, in 1824, it was hoped, might have led them to justify the too hasty confidence which was then reposed in them. But, five years of attentive consideration of their conduct have since passed; and we cannot conscientiously renew the former tribute of our respect.

The NEXT is an extract from the last Number of the Westminster Review. And this is an article not only of rare and singular merit, but one which is most seasonably adapted to meet the exigencies of the present moment. Its clear, plain, and intelligible statements are only to be outdone by the force and luminousness of its arguments. If we could indulge the base passion of envy, especially in such a cause, we should envy the writer's power of producing on the public mind the effects which the popular talents, wherewith the great Author of those talents, has endowed him, enables him to produce;—were it not that we should almost shrink from the heavy responsibility, both to God and man, which they impose upon their possessor.

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DEATH WARRANT OF NEGRO SLAVERY,

&c. &c. &c.

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EXTRACT FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW, NO. LXXXII.

Or the numerous excellent works in which this important subject has lately been discussed, that of Mr. Stephen is the most comprehensive, and, in many respects, the most valuable. We are not aware that any opponent has appeared, sufficiently intrepid to deny his statements, or to dispute their results. The more decent and cautious advocates of Slavery carefully avoid all allusion to a publication which they feel to be unanswerable; and the boldest content themselves with misrepresenting and reviling what they cannot even pretend to confute. In truth, it is not too much to assert, that, on the part of the slave-drivers and their supporters, this controversy has, for the most part, been conducted with a disingenuousness and a bitterness to which literary history furnishes no parallel. The warfare has been carried on by a race of scribblers, who, like the mercenary Mohawks, so often our auxiliaries in Transatlantic campaigns, unite the indifference of the hireling to the ferocity of the cannibal; who take aim from an ambush; and who desire victory only that they may have the pleasure of scalping and torturing the vanquished.

The friends of humanity and freedom have often boasted, with honest pride, that the wise and good of hostile sects and factions seemed, when Slavery or the Slave-trade were in question, to forget their mutual antipathies;—that the introduction of this subject was to such men, what the proclamation of a Crusade was to the warriors of the dark ages,—a signal to suspend their petty disputes, and to array themselves under the same holy banner, against the same accursed enemy.—In this respect the slave-drivers are now even with us. They, too, may boast, that, if our cause has received support from honest men of all religious and political parties, theirs has tended, in as great a degree, to combine and conciliate every form of violence and illiberality. Tories and radicals, prebendaries and field-preachers, are to

be found in their ranks. The only requisites for one who aspires to enlist, are a front of brass and a tongue of venom.

' Omnigenumque Deum monstra, et latrator Anubis Contra Neptunum et Venerem, contraque Minervam Tela tenent.'

But it is neither on facts nor on arguments that Slavery seems now to depend for protection. It neither doubles, nor stands at bay. It has neither the ingenuity of the hare, nor the intrepidity of the lion. It defends itself, like a hunted polecat, by the loathsomeness with which it taints the atmosphere around it; and hopes to escape by disgusting those whom it can neither weary nor subdue. We could say much on this subject. But the sum is, that 'the worm will do his kind'—and we have a more important task to perform. It is our intention to analyze, very concisely, the valuable work of Mr. Stephen; and afterwards to offer to our readers some remarks which the perusal of it has suggested.

Mr. Stephen begins by inquiring into the origin and authority of the Colonial Slave-laws. It has been commonly supposed in England, that there exists some known local law in the Colonies, distinct from the law of England, by which the bondage of the Negro has been introduced and defined. There is, however, no such law. The Colonists could, at no time, venture to present an act for such a purpose to an English Sovereign. The Spanish conquerors and the roving pirates of the Antilles had established that state: and the English settlers considered themselves as succeeding to the rights of the original despoilers of America. Those rights, as they at that time existed, may be summed up in one short and terrible maxim, that the slave is the absolute property of the master. It is desirable that this should be known; because, although a few restraining statutes have of late years been passed, this odious principle is still the basis of all West-Indian legislation. It is pre-supposed in all meliorating acts. It is the rule, and the restraints are exceptions. In the benefits which every other English subject derives from the common law, the Negro has no share. His master may lawfully treat him as he pleases, except in points regulated by express

Mr. Stephen proceeds to analyze the legal nature of the relation between the master and the slave. Throughout the West Indies, Slavery is a constrained service; a service without wages. In some of the Colonies, indeed, there are acts which affect to regulate the time of labour, and the amount of the subsistence which shall be given in return. But, from causes to which we shall hereafter advert, these acts are nugatory. In other islands, even these ostensible reforms have not taken place; and the owner may legally give his slaves as much to do, and as little to eat, as he thinks fit.

In all the islands, the master may legally imprison his slave. In all the islands he may legally flog him; and in some of the islands he may legally flog him at his discretion. The best of the meliorating acts promise little, and perform less. By some of them it is enacted, that the slave shall not be flogged, till recovered from the effects of his last flogging; by others, that he shall not receive more than a certain number of lashes in one day. These laws, useless as they are, have a meaning. But there are others which add insult to cruelty. In some of the Colonial codes there are facetious provisions, that the slave shall not receive more than a certain number of lashes at one time, or for one fault. What is the legal definition of a time? Or who are the legal judges of a fault? If the master should choose to say that it is a fault in his slave to have woolly hair, whom does the law authorize to contradict him?

It is just to say, that the murder of a slave is now a capital crime. But the West-Indian rules of evidence render the execution of the laws on this subject almost impossible. The most atrocious kinds of mutilation-even those which in England are punished with deathwhen committed upon the person of a slave, subject the offender only to a fine, or to a short imprisonment. In Dominica, for instance, 'to maim, deface, mutilate, or cruelly torture' a slave, is a crime which is to be expiated by a fine, not exceeding one hundred pounds currency (401. sterling), or by imprisonment, not exceeding the term of three months. By the law of Jamaica, a master who perpetrates any outrage short of murder on the person of his slave, is subject to a fine, not exceeding one hundred pounds currency (70% sterling), or to imprisonment, not exceeding the term of twelve months. In very atrocious cases, the court may direct the enfranchisement of the slave. But this, though a benefit, as far as it goes, to the Negro, is a very slight aggravation of the punishment of the master: at most, it is only an addition of a few pounds to the fine: and as the possession of a slave who has been maimed in such a manner as to render him helpless, is rather burdensome than profitable, it would, in many cases, be really an advantage to the criminal.

If these terrible prerogatives were confined to the master alone, the condition of the slave would be sufficiently wretched. Yet it would not be without alleviations. The proprietor might sometimes be restrained by a sense of his pecuniary interest, if not by higher conside-

rations, from those extreme outrages, against which the law affords so scanty a protection. At all events, during his absence his Negroes would enjoy an interval of security. Unhappily, the Colonial codes permit all the representatives and agents of the master—black and white, bond and free—to exercise most of his despotic powers.

We have seen that the slave has no legal property in his own body. It is almost unnecessary to say, that he has no property in any thing else; that all his acquisitions belong, like himself, to his master. He is, in fact, a chattel. We should rather say, that, to serve the purpose of rangeity and tyrappy, he is alternately considered as real and as

of rapacity and tyranny, he is alternately considered as real and as personal property. He may be sold or bequeathed at the pleasure of his master. He may be put up to auction, by process of law, for the benefit of the creditors or legatees of his master. In either of these ways he may be, in a moment, torn for ever from his home, his associates, his own children. He is, in addition to this, legally a subject of mortgages, demises, leases, settlements in tail, in remainder, and in reversion. The practice of raising money on this species of property, is favoured by the laws of all the Colonies, and has been equally fatal to the owner and to the slave. It is fatal to the owner, because it enables him to risk capital not his own in the precarious lottery of the West-Indian sugar-trade. It is fatal to the slave, because, in the first place, while it leaves to the master all his power to oppress, it deprives him of his power to manumit; and secondly, because it leads the master to keep possession of his Negroes, and to compel them to labour, when he has no prospect of holding them long, and is therefore naturally inclined to make us much by them, and to spend as little upon them, as possible; a fact amply proved by the miserable state in which the gang is generally found, when transferred from the ruined planter to the half-ruined mortgagee.

Such is the legal condition of the Negro, considered with reference to his Master. We shall proceed to examine into the nature of the relation in which he stands towards free persons in general.

He is not competent to be a party to any civil action, either as pluintiff or defendant; nor can he be received as informant or prosecutor against any person of free condition. He is protected only as a horse is protected in this country. His owner may bring an action against any person who may have occasioned the loss of his services. But it is plain that the slave may sustain many civil injuries, to which this circuitous mode of obtaining redress is not applicable; and even when it is applicable, the damages are awarded, not to the injured party, but to his master. The protection which indictments and

criminal informations afford, is also of very narrow extent. Many crimes which, when committed against a white man, are considered as most atrocious, may be committed by any white man against a slave with perfect impunity. To rob a slave, for instance, is, in most of the islands, not even a misdemeanor. In this case, the grand principle of Colonial law is suspended. The property of a slave, it seems, is considered as belonging to his owner for the purpose of oppression, but not for the purpose of protection. By the meliorating laws of some of the Colonies, the crime of highway robbery upon a Negro is punished by a fine, which in no case exceed thirty pounds currency.

But this is not all. The natural right of self-defence is denied to the slave. By the laws of almost all the islands, a slave who should defend himself from murder or torture, to the injury of a White person, though such White person should possess no authority whatever over him, might be punished with death.

We now come to the laws respecting the evidence of slaves-laws which the Colonists stoutly defend—and with reason; for, while these remain unaltered, the meliorating acts, feeble at best, must always be utterly inefficient. The testimony of these unfortunate beings is not admissible in any cause, civil or criminal, against a White person. To this general rule there are, in one or two Colonies, some trivial and worthless exceptions. It is needless to say, that every crime may be easily perpetrated in a community of which only one member in ten or fifteen is a competent witness. The only excuse we ever heard made for so disgraceful a state of law is this, that the Negroes are ignorant of the nature and obligations of an oath, and, in fact, are scarcely responsible beings. But from this excuse the legislators of the Antilles have excluded themselves, by enacting, that a slave who commits perjury, in a criminal cause, against another slave, shall suffer the same punishment as the prisoner, if convicted, would have suffered. If a slave be ignorant of the nature of an oath, why is he admitted as a witness against any human being? Why is he punished, in some cases, with death, for an offence which subjects his more enlightened, and therefore more guilty, master, only to transportation? If, on the other hand, he possesses the moral and intellectual qualifications which are required in a witness, why is he not suffered to appear against a European?

But we must proceed. The slave, thus excluded from the protection of the law, is subject to all its restraints. He undergoes the miseries of a beast of burden, without enjoying its immunities. He is bound, notwithstanding that alleged inferiority of his understanding,

which is admitted as a reason for curtailing his rights but not for lightening his responsibility, by the whole of the Criminal code which is in force against free persons. And, in addition to this, he is subjected to another most unjust and cruel code, made for his class alone. If he flies from the Colony, he is put to death. If he goes beyond the limits of the plantation to which he is attached, without a written permission, he is liable to be severely punished. Actions in themselves perfectly innocent—buying or selling certain goods in a market, raising certain descriptions of produce, possessing certain species of live stock—are crimes for which the Negro is punished, unless he can produce a written authority from his owner. To beat a drum, to blow a horn, to dance, to play at quoits, to throw squibs, to make fire-works, are all offences when committed by a slave, and subject him to the cruel chastisement of the whip. When things merely indifferent are visited with such severe penalties, it may be easily imagined that real delinquencies are not very mercifully dealt with. In fact, many actions for which a White man is only imprisoned, or otherwise slightly punished, if punished at all, are capital crimes when committed by a slave. Such are, stealing, or attempting to steal, to the value of 12d. currency; killing any animal of the value of 6s.; uttering mutinous words; and a long list of equally heinous crimes. We have already mentioned the infamous law on the subject of perjury. Another of a most kingly character is in force in the same islands. To "compass or imagine the death" of any of the White inhabitants (God bless their majesties!) is an enormity for which a slave is punished with death. It is contrary to the duty of their allegiance!

Such is the penal code to which the slaves are subject. The manner in which they are tried is, if possible, still more disgraceful. On charges which do not affect their lives, a single Justice, or two at most, are competent to decide. In capital cases, several Justices must attend, and, in most of the colonies, a Jury is summoned—if that name can be applied where there is neither parity of condition nor right of challenge. No previous investigation takes place before a Grand Jury. In most of the islands no record is drawn up: in some, it is enacted that the execution shall immediately follow the sentence. The prisoner is now sufficiently lucky to be hanged; but formerly it was not unusual to inflict what the Colonial codes styled 'exemplary punishment.' When it was thought expedient to exercise this right, the offender was roasted alive, hung up in irons to perish by thirst, or shut up in a cage and starved to death! These punishments were commonly reserved for wretches who had committed the diabolical

crime of insurrection against the just and paternal government, of which we have feebly attempted to delineate the excellence.

The bondage, of which we have given this description, is hereditary It is entailed on the posterity of the slave to the remotest generations. The law does not compel his master to enfranchise him, on receiving a fair price: on the contrary, it has actually interfered to prevent the master, even when so inclined, from giving him his liberty. In some of the islands, a direct tax was imposed on manumission; and in all, the encouragement which is given to the practice of raising money on Negroes by mortgage, tended to obstruct their liberation.

Slavery in the West Indies is confined to Negroes and People of Colour. This circumstance is peculiar to the slavery of the New World; and its effects are most calamitous. The external peculiarities of the African race are thus associated in the minds of the Colonists with every thing degrading, and are considered as the disgusting livery of the most abject servitude. Hence it is, that the Free Negroes and Mulattoes lie under so many legal disabilities, and experience such contemptuous treatment, that their condition can be esteemed desirable only when compared with the bondage to which it has succeeded. Of the rules to which this class is subjected, we shall notice only one of the most odious. We speak of the presumption against liberty, which is a recognised principle of Colonial law. The West-Indian maxim is, that every Negro and Mulatto is to be considered as a slave, till, by documentary evidence, he can be proved to be otherwise. It may be notorious, that he has been free since he first resided in the colony—that he has lived twenty years in England —that he is a citizen of Hayti, or Columbia. All this is immaterial. If he cannot produce a deed of manumission, he is liable to be put up to sale by public auction! On this subject remarks would be superfluous. Thank God, we are writing for a free people!

We have not alluded to that part of Mr. Stephen's work in which the lamentable state of the law on the subject of religious instruction is described; because the evil has been universally acknowledged, and something intended for a remedy has at last been provided. The imagined specific, as our readers are aware, is an Ecclesiastical Establishment. This measure, we doubt not, is well intended; but we feel convinced, that, unless combined with other reforms, it will prove almost wholly useless. The immorality and irreligion of the slaves are the necessary consequences of their political and personal degradation. They are not considered by the law as human beings; and they have therefore, in some measure, ceased to be human beings.

They must become men before they can become Christians. A great effect may, under fortunate circumstances, have been wrought on par-ticular individuals: but those who believe that any extensive effect can be produced by religious instruction on this miserable race, may believe in the famous conversion wrought by St. Antony on the fish. Can a preacher prevail on his hearers strictly to fulfil their conjugal duties, in a country where no protection is given to their conjugal rights; in a country where the husband and wife may, at the pleasure of the master, or by a process of law, be, in an instant, separated for ever? Can he persuade them to rest on the Sunday, in colonies where the law appoints that time for the markets? Is there any lesson which a Christian minister is more solemnly bound to teach; is there any lesson which it is, in a religious point of view, more important for a convert to learn, than that it is a duty to refuse obedience to the unlawful commands of superiors? Are the new pastors of the slaves to inculcate this principle, or not? In other words, are the slaves to remain uninstructed in the fundamental laws of Christian morality, or are their teachers to be hanged? This is the alternative. We all remember, that it was made a charge against Mr. Smith that he had read an inflammatory chapter of the Bible to his congregation! Excellent encouragement for their future teachers 'to declare unto them,' according to the expression of an old divine, far too Methodistical to be considered as an authority in the West Indies, 'the whole counsel of God!

The great body of the Colonists have resolutely opposed religious instruction; and they are in the right. They know, though their misinformed friends in England do not know, that Christianity and slavery cannot long exist together. At every step which the Negro makes in the knowledge and discrimination of right and wrong, he will learn to reprobate more and more the system under which he lives. He will not indeed be so prone to engage in rash and foolish tumults; but he will be as willing as he now is to struggle for liberty, and far more capable of struggling with effect. The forms in which Christianity has been at different times disguised, have been often hostile to liberty; but wherever the spirit has surmounted the forms—in France, during the wars of the Huguenots; in Holland, during the reign of Philip II.; in Scotland, at the time of the Reformation; in England, through the whole contest against the Stuarts, from their accession to their expulsion; in New-England, through its whole history—in every place, in every age, it has inspired a hatred of oppression, and a love of freedom! It would be thus in the West Indies. The attempts

which have been made to press a few detached texts into the cause of tyranny, have never produced any extensive effect. Those who cannot refute them by reasoning and comparison, will be hurried forward by the sense of intolerable wrongs, and the madness of wounded affection. All this the Colonists have discovered; and we feel assured that they will never suffer religious instruction to be unreservedly given to the slaves. In that case, the Establishment will degenerate into a job. This is no chimerical apprehension. There have been clergymen in the West Indies for many years past; and what have they done for the Negroes? In what have they conduced, either to their temporal or to their spiritual welfare? Doubtless, there have been respectable men among them. But is it not notorious, that the benefices of the Colonies have been repeatedly given to the outcasts of English society-men whom the inhabitants would not venture to employ as book-keepers, yet whom they desired to retain as boon companions? Any person, who will look over the Parliamentary papers which contain the answers returned by the Colonial Clergy to certain queries sent out a few years ago by Lord Bathurst, will see some curious instances of the ignorance, the idleness, and the levity of that body. Why should the new Establishment be less corrupt than the old? The dangers to which it is exposed are the same; we do not see that its securities are much greater. It has Bishops, no doubt; and when we observe that bishops are more active than their inferiors, on this side of the Atlantic, we shall begin to hope that they may be useful on the other *.

Those reforms have begun at the wrong end. 'God,' says old Hooker (no enemy to Episcopal Establishments), 'first assigned Adam maintenance for life, and then appointed him a law to observe.' Our rulers would have done well to imitate the example,—to give some security to the hearth and to the back of the slave, before they sent him Bishops, Archdeacons, Chancellors, and Chapters.

The work of Mr. Stephen has, we think, disposed for ever of some of the principal arguments which are urged by the Colonists †. If those who conscientiously support slavery be open to conviction, if its dishonest advocates be susceptible of shame, they can surely never again resort to that mode of defence, which they have so often employed

^{*} See Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 41, No. 44, Supplement to No. 46, No. 47, and No. 48.

[†] Mr. Stephen's work was published in 1823, and reviewed in 1824. Six years have passed, and Mr. Stephen's delineation is still an accurate representation of the Slave laws in our colonies. The slight variations which have taken place in colonies having legislatures of their own, have effected no real change in the law.—See Anti-Slavery Reporter No. 52, and the authorities there referred to.

when hard pressed by some particular case of oppression. On such occasions their cry has been, 'These are individual instances: you 'must not deduce general conclusions from them. What would you 'say, if we were to form our estimate of English society from the 'Police Reports, or the Newgate Calendar? Look at the rules, 'and not at the exceptions.' Here, then, we have those boasted rules. And what are they? We find that the actions which other societies punish as crimes, are in the West Indies sanctioned by law;—that practices of which England affords no example but in the records of the jail and the gibbet, are there suffered to exist unpunished;—that atrocities may there be perpetrated in the drawing-room or in the market-place, on the persons of untried and unconvicted individuals, which here would scarcely find an asylum in the vaults of the Blood-bowl House.

Is it any answer to this charge, now most fully established, to say that we too have our crimes? Unquestionably, under all systems, however wise; under all circumstances, however fortunate; the passions of men will incite them to evil. The most vigilant police, the most rigid tribunals, the severest penalties, are but imperfect restraints upon avarice and revenge. What, then, must be the case where these restraints are withdrawn? In England, there is a legal remedy for every injury. If the first Prince of the Blood were to treat the poorest pauper in St. Giles's, as the best code in the West Indies authorizes a master to treat his slave, it would be better for him that he had never been born. Yet even here we find, that, wherever power is given, it is occasionally abused; that magistrates, not having the fear of the Court of King's Bench before their eyes, will sometimes be guilty of injustice and tyranny; that even parents will sometimes starve, torture, and murder the helpless beings to whom they have given life. And is it not evident, that where there are fewer checks there will be more cruelty?

But we are told, the manners of a people, the state of public opinion, are of more real consequence than any written code. Many things, it is confessed, in the Colonial laws, are cruel and unjust in theory: but we are assured that the feeling of the Colonists renders the practical operation of the system lenient and liberal. We answer, that public feeling, though an excellent auxiliary to laws, always has been, and always must be, a miserable and inefficient substitute for them. The rules of evidence on which public opinion proceeds are defective, and its decisions are capricious. Its condemnation frequently spares the guilty, and falls on the innocent. It is terrible

to sensitive and generous minds; but it is disregarded by those whose hardened depravity most requires restraint. Hence its decrees, however salutary, unless supported by the clearer definitions and stronger sanctions of legislation, will be daily and hourly infringed; and, with principles which rest only on public opinion, frequent infraction amounts to a repeal. Nothing that is very common can be very digraceful. Thus public opinion, when not strengthened by positive enactment, is first defied, and then vitiated. At best it is a feeble check to wickedness; at last is become its most powerful auxiliary.

As a remedy for the evils of a system of slavery, public opinion must be utterly inefficacious; and that for this simple reason, that the opinion of the slaves themselves goes for nothing. The desire which we feel to obtain the approbation, and to avoid the censure, of our neighbours, is no innate or universal sentiment. It always springs, directly or indirectly, from consideration of the power which others possess to serve or to injure us. The good-will of the lower orders is courted only in countries where they possess political privileges, and where there is much that they can give, and much that they can take away. Their opinion is important or unimportant, in proportion as their legal rights are great or small. It can, therefore, never be a substitute for legal rights. Does a Smithfield drover care for the love or hatred of his oxen? And yet his oxen, since the passing of Mr. Martin's meliorating act, are scarcely in a more unprotected condition than the slaves in our islands.

The opinion, then, which is to guard the slaves from the oppressions of the privileged order, is the opinion of the privileged order itself. A vast authority is entrusted to the master—the law imposes scarcely any restraints upon him-and we are required to believe, that the place of all other checks will be fully supplied by the general sense of those who participate in his power and his temptations. This may be reason at Kingston; but will it pass at Westminster? We are not inveighing against the White inhabitants of the West Indies. We do not say that they are naturally more cruel or more sensual than ourselves. But we say that they are men: and they desire to be considered as angels! We say, as angels; for to no human being, however generous and beneficent, to no philanthropist, to no fathers of the church, could powers like theirs be safely entrusted. Such authority a parent ought not to have over his children .- They ask very complacently, "Are we men of a different species from yourselves? We come among you; we mingle with you in all kinds of business and pleasure; we buy and sell with you on 'Change in the morning; we dance with your daughters in the evening. Are not our manners civil? Are not our dinners good? Are we not kind friends, fair dealers, generous benefactors? Are not our names in the subscription list of all your charities? And can you believe that we are such monsters as the Saints represent us to be? Can you imagine, that by merely crossing the Atlantic we acquire a new nature?" We reply, You are not men of a different species from ourselves; and therefore we will not give you powers with which we would not dare to trust ourselves. We know that your passions are like ours; we know that your restraints are fewer; and therefore we know that your crimes must be greater. Are despotic sovereigns men of harder hearts by nature than their subjects? are they born with an hereditary thirst for blood, with a natural incapacity for friendship? Surely not. Yet what is their general character? False-cruel-licentious-ungrateful. Many of them have performed single acts of splendid generosity and heroism; a few may be named whose general administration has been salutary; but scarcely one has passed through life without committing at least some one atrocious act, from the guilt and infamy of which restricting laws would have saved him. If our own king Henry VIII. had been a private man, he might have torn his wife's ruff, and kicked her lapdog: he was a king, and he cut off her head-not that his passions were more brutal than those of many other men, but that they were less restrained. How many of the West-Indian overseers can boast of the piety and magnanimity of Theodosius? Yet, in a single moment of anger, that prince destroyed more innocent people than all the ruffians of Europe stab in fifty years. Thus it is with a master in the colonies. We will suppose him to be a good-natured man, but subject, like other men, to occasional fits of passion. He gives an order: it is slowly or negligently executed. In England, he would grumble, perhaps swear a little: in the West Indies, the law empowers him to inflict a severe flogging on the loiterer. Are we very uncharitable in supposing that he will sometimes exercise his privilege?

It by no means follows that a person who is humane in England will be humane to his Negroes in the West Indies. Nothing is so capricious and inconsistent as the compassion of men. The Romans were people of the same flesh and blood with ourselves—they loved their friends, they cried at tragedies, they gave money to beggars—yet we know their fondness for gladiatorial shows. When, by order of Pompey, some elephants were tortured in the amphitheatre, the audience was so shocked at the yells and contortions by which the

poor creatures expressed their agony, that they burst forth into execrations against their favourite general. The same people, in the same place, had probably often given the fatal twirl of the thumb which condemned some gallant barbarian to receive the sword. In our own time, many a man shoots partridges in such numbers that he is compelled to bury them, who would chastise his son for amusing himself with the equally interesting, and not more cruel diversion, of catching flies and tearing them to pieces. The drover goads oxen—the fishmonger crimps cod—the dragoon sabres a Frenchman—the Spanish Inquisition burns a Jew—the Irish gentleman torments a Catholic. These persons are not necessarily destitute of feeling. Each of them would shrink from any cruel employment, except that to which his situation has familiarized him.

situation has familiarized him.

There is only one way in which the West Indians will ever convince the people of England that their practice is merciful, and that is, by making their laws merciful. We cannot understand why men should so tenaciously fight for powers which they do not mean to exercise. If the oppressive privileges of the master be nominal, and not real, let him cede them, and silence calumny at once and for ever. Let him cede them for his own honour; let him cede them in compliance with the desire—the vain and superfluous desire, we will suppose—of the people of England. Is the repeal of laws which have become obsolete, is the prohibition of crimes which are never committed, too great a return for a bounty of twelve hundred thousand pounds—for a protecting duty most injurious to the manufacturers of England and the cultivators of Hindostan—for an army, which alone protects from inevitable ruin the lives and possessions of the Colonists?

The fact notoriously is, that West-Indian manners give protection

inevitable ruin the lives and possessions of the Colonists?

The fact notoriously is, that West-Indian manners give protection even to those extreme enormities against which the West-Indian laws provide. We have already adverted to one of the most ordinary sophisms of our opponents. "Why," they exclaim, "is our whole body to be censured for the depravity of a few? Every society has its miscreants. If we had our Hodge, you had your Thurtell: if we had our Huggins, you had your Wall. No candid reasoner will ground general charges on individual cases." The refutation is simple. When a community does nothing to prevent guilt, it ought to bear the blame of it. Wickedness, when punished, is disgraceful only to the offender: unpunished, it is disgraceful to the whole society. Our charge against the Colonists is, not that crimes are perpetrated among them, but that they are tolerated. We will give a single instance. Since the West Indians are fond of referring to our Newgate Calendar, we

will place side by side a leaf from that melancholy register, and another from the West-Indian annals.

Mr. Wall was governor at Goree. In that situation he flogged a man to death, on pretence of mutiny. On his return to England, he was indicted for murder. He escaped to the Continent. For twenty years he remained in exile; for twenty years the English people retained the impression of his crime uneffaced within their hearts. He shifted his residence—he disguised his person—he changed his name—still their eyes were upon him, for evil, and not for good. At length, conceiving that all danger was at an end, he returned. He was tried, convicted, and hanged, amidst the huzzas of an innumerable multitude*.

Edward Huggins of Nevis, about fifteen years ago, flogged upwards of twenty slaves, in the public market-place, with such severity as to produce the death of one, and to ruin the constitutions of many. He had grossly violated the law of the Colony, which prescribes a limit to such inflictions. He had violated it in open day, and in the presence of a magistrate. He was indicted by the law officer of the Crown. His advocate acknowledged the facts, but argued that the act on which he was tried was passed only to silence the zealots in England, and was never intended to be enforced. Huggins was acquitted!-But that was a trifle. Some members of the House of Assembly lost their seats at the next election, for taking part against him. A printer of a neighbouring island was convicted of a libel, merely for publishing an official report of the evidence transmitted to him by authority. In a word, Huggins was considered as a martyr to the common cause, and grew in influence and popularity; while a most respectable planter, an enlightened and accomplished gentleman, Mr. Tobin, who, nobly despising the prejudices of his class, had called the attention of the Government to these diabolical outrages, was menaced with prosecutions, assailed with slanders, and preserved only by blindness from

Let these cases be compared. We do not say that Wall was not as bad a man as Huggins; but we do say that the English people have nothing to do with the crime of Wall, and that the public character of the people of Nevis suffers seriously by the crime of Huggins. They have adopted the guilt, and they must share in the infamy. We

^{*} We should be far, indeed, from applauding those shouts, if they were the exultation of cruelty; but they arose from the apprehension that Court favour was about to save the criminal; and the feeling expressed was for the triumph of justice.

know that the advocates of Slavery affect to deride this and similar narratives as old and threadbare. They sneer at them in conversation, and cough them down in the House of Commons. But it is in vain. They are written on the hearts of the people; and they will be remembered when all the smooth nothings of all the official defenders of such transactions are forgotten.

The truth is simply this. Bad laws and bad customs, reciprocally producing and produced by each other, have given to the Whites in all the slave islands—Dutch, Spanish, French, and English—a peculiar character, in which almost all the traits, which in this quarter of the world distinguish the different nations, are lost. We think we describe that character sufficiently, when we call it the despotic character. In nothing does this temper more strongly appear than in the rage and contempt with which the Colonists receive every command, and, indeed, every admonition, from the authorities of the mother country. When the territorial power and the commercial monopoly of the East-India Company have been at stake, has that great body conducted itself thus? Do even foreign powers treat us in this manner? We have often remonstrated with the greatest sovereigns of the Continent on the subject of the slave trade. We have been repulsed; we have been deluded; but by whom have we been insulted? The representations of the King and people of England have never been met with outrageous scorn and anger, except by the men who owe their food to our bounties, and their lives to our troops. To the most gentle and moderate advice, to the suggestions of the most respectable of the West-India proprietors resident in England, they reply only in ravings of absurd slander, or impotent defiance. The essays in their newspapers, the speeches of their legislators, the resolutions of their vestries, are, almost without exception, mere collections of rancorous abuse, unmixed with argument. If the Anti-Slavery Society would publish a small tract, containing simply the leading articles of five or six numbers of the Jamaica Gazette, without note or comment, they would, we believe, do more to illustrate the character of their adversaries, than by any other means which can be devised. Such a collection would exhibit to the country the real nature of that malignant spirit which banished Salisbury, which destroyed Smith, and which broke the honest heart of Ramsay.

It is remarkable, that most of these zealots of slavery have little or no pecuniary interest in the question. If the colonies should be ruined, the loss will fall, not upon the book-keepers, the overseers, the herd of needy emigrants, who make up the noisy circles of Jamaica; but upon the Chandoses, the Ellises, the Hibberts, the Mannings, the Pallmers, &c. &c. &c., in this country. They might have been excused, if any persons could be excused, for employing violent and abusive language. And why have they not done so? Simply because they live in England, and understand and participate in English feelings. The Colonists, on the other hand, are degraded by familiarity with oppression. They do not merely live by oppression; they practise; they inflict it. Let us not be deceived. The cry which resounds from the West Indies is raised by men who are trembling less for their property than for the privileges of their caste. These are the persons who love slavery for its own sake. The declarations so often made by the Parliament, by the Ministers, by the deadliest enemies of slavery, that the interests of all parties will be fairly considered, bring no comfort to them. They may have no possessions—but they have white faces. Should compensation be given, few of them will receive a sixpence; but they will lose the power of oppressing, with impunity, every man who has a black skin. And it is to these men, who have scarcely any interest in the value of colonial property, but who have a deep interest—the interest of a petty tyrant, and a despicable pride—in the maintenance of colonial injustice, that the British Parliament is required to give up its unquestionable right of superintendance over every part of our empire. If this were requested as a matter of indulgence, or recommended as a matter of expediency, we might well be surprised. But it is demanded as a constitutional right.—On what does this right rest? On what statute? On what charter? On what precedent? On what analogy? That the uniform practice of past ages has been against their claim, they themselves do not venture to deny. Do they mean to assert, that a Parliament in which they are not represented ought not to legislate for them? That question we leave them to settle with

event shall have taken place, your demand will deserve consideration.

At present, what you require under the name of freedom is nothing but unlimited power to oppress. It is the freedom of Nero.

'But we will rebel!' Who can refrain from thinking of Captain Lemuel Gulliver, who, while raised sixty feet from the ground on the hand of the King of Brodignag, claps his hand on his sword and tells his Majesty that he knows how to defend himself? You will rebel! his Majesty that he knows how to defend himself? You will rebel! Bravely resolved, most magnanimous Grildrig? But remember the wise remark of Lord Beefington—'Courage without power,' said that illustrious exile, 'is like a consumptive running footman.' What are your means of resistance? Are there, in all the islands put together, ten thousand White men capable of bearing arms? Are not your forces, such as they are, divided into small portions which can never act in concert? But this is mere trifling. Are you, in point of fact, act in concert? But this is mere trifling. Are you, in point of fact, at this moment able to protect yourselves against your slaves, without our assistance? If you can still rise up and lie down in security—if you can still eat the bread of the fatherless, and grind the faces of the poor—if you can still hold your petty parliaments, and say your little speeches, and make your little motions—if you can still outrage and insult the Parliament and People of England, to what do you owe it? To nothing but to our contemptuous mercy. If we suspend our protection, if we recall our troops, in a week the knife is at your throats!

Look to it, that we do not take you at your word. What are you to us, that we should pamper and defend you? If the Atlantic Ocean should pass over you, and your place know you no more, what should

to us, that we should pamper and defend you? If the Atlantic Ocean should pass over you, and your place know you no more, what should we lose? Could we find no other cultivators to accept of our enormous bounties on sugar?—No other pestilential region to which we might send our soldiers to catch the yellow-fever?—No other community for which we might pour forth our blood and lavish our money, to purchase nothing but injuries and insults? What do we make by you? If England is no longer to be the mistress of her Colonies; if she is to be only the handmaid of their pleasures, or the accomplice of their crimes; she may at least venture to ask, as a handmaid, what are to be the wages of her service; as an accomplice, what is to be her portion of the spoil? If justice, and mercy, and liberty, and the law of God, and the happiness of man, be words without a meaning, we at least talk to the purpose when we talk of pounds, shillings, and pence.

Let us count our gains. Let us bring to the test the lofty phrases of Colonial declamation. 'The West Indies,' we are told, 'are a source of vast wealth and revenue to the country. They are a nursery of

of vast wealth and revenue to the country. They are a nursery of

seamen. They take great quantities of our manufactures. They add to our political importance. They are useful posts in time of war.'— These absurdities have been repeated, till they have begun to impose upon the impostors who invented them. Let us examine them briefly.

Our commercial connexion with the West Indies is simply this. We buy our sugar from them at a higher price than is given for it in any other part of the world. The surplus they export to the Continent, where the price is lower; and we pay them the difference out of our own pockets. Our trade with the West Indies is saddled with almost all the expense of their civil and military establishments; and with a bounty of 1,200,000l. Let these be deducted from the profits of which we hear so much, and their amount will shrink indeed. Let us then deduct from the residue the advantages which we relinquish in order to obtain it—that is to say, the profits of a free sugar-trade all over the world—and then we shall be able to estimate the boasted gains of a connexion to which we have sacrificed the Negroes in one hemisphere, and the Hindoos in the other.

But the West Indians take great quantities of our manufactures!—They can take only a return for the commodities which they send us. And from whatever country we may import the same commodities, to that country must we send out the same returns. What is it that now limits the demands of our Eastern empire? Absolutely nothing but the want of an adequate return. From that immense market, from the custom of one hundred millions of consumers, our manufacturers are in a great measure excluded, by the protecting duties on East-Indian sugar.

But a great revenue is derived from the West-Indian trade!—Here, again, we have the same fallacy. As long as the present quantity of sugar is imported into England, no matter from what country, the revenue will not suffer, and, in proportion as the price of sugar is diminished, the consumption, and consequently the revenue, must increase.

But the West-Indian trade affords extensive employment to British shipping and seamen!—Why more than any equally extensive trade with any other part of the world? The more active our trade, the more demand there will be for shipping and seamen; and every one, who has learnt the alphabet of Political Economy, knows that trade is active in proportion only as it is free.

There are some who assert, that, in a military and political point of view, the West Indies are of great importance to this country. This is a common, but a monstrous, misrepresentation. We venture to say, that Colonial empire has been one of the greatest curses of modern

Europe. What nation has it ever strengthened? What nation has it ever enriched? What have been its fruits? Wars of frequent occurrence and immense cost, fettered trade, lavish expenditure, clashing jurisdiction, corruption in governments, and indigence among the people. What have Mexico and Peru done for Spain; the Brazils, for Portugal; Batavia, for Holland? Or, if the experience of others is lost upon us, shall we not profit by our own? What have we not sacrificed to our infatuated passion for Transatlantic dominion? This it is that has so often led us to risk our own smiling gardens and dear firesides for some snowy desert or infectious morass on the other side of the globe. This inspired us with the project of conquering America in Germany. This induced us to resign all the advantages of our insular situation; to embroil ourselves in the intrigues and fight the battles of half the Continent; to form coalitions which were instantly broken, and to give subsidies which were never earned. This gave birth to the fratricidal war against American liberty, with all its digraceful defeats, and all its barren victories, and all the massacres of the Indian hatchet, and all the bloody contracts of the Hessian slaughter-house. This it was which, in the war against the French republic, induced us to send thousands and tens of thousands of our bravest troops to die in West-Indian hospitals, while the armies of our enemies were pouring over the Rhine and the Alps. When a colonial acquisition has been in prospect, we have thought no expenditure extravagant, no interference perilous: gold has been to us as dust, and blood as water. Shall we never learn wisdom? Shall we never cease to prosecute a pursuit wilder than the wildest dream of alchymy, with all the credulity and all the profusion of Sir Epicure Mammon?

Those who maintain that settlements so remote conduce to the military or maritime power of nations, fly in the face of history. The Colonies of Spain were far more extensive and populous than ours. Has Spain, at any time within the last two centuries, been a match for England, either by land or by sea? Fifty years ago, our colonial dominions in America were far larger and more prosperous than those which we at present possess. Have we since that time experienced any decay in our political influence, in our opulence, or in our security? Or shall we say that Virginia was a less valuable possession than Jamaica, or Massachusetts than Barbadoes?

The fact is, that all the evils of our Colonial system are immensely aggravated in the West Indies, by the peculiar character of the state of slavery which exists there. Our other settlements we have to defend only against foreign invasion: these we must protect against the

constant enmity of the miserable bondsmen, who are always waiting for the moment of deliverance, if not of revenge. With our other establishments we may form commercial relations advantageous to both parties: but these are in a state of absolute pauperism; for, what are bounties and forced prices but an enormous poor-rate in disguise?

These are the benefits for which we are to be thankful; these are the benefits, in return for which we are to suffer a handful of managers and attorneys to insult the King, Lords, and Commons of England, in the exercise of rights as old and sacred as any part of our Constitution. If the proudest potentate in Europe, if the King of France or the Emperor of all the Russias, had treated our government as these creatures of our own have dared to do, should we not have taken such satisfaction as would have made the ears of all who heard of it to . tingle? Would not there have been a stately manifesto, and a warlike message to both Houses, and vehement speeches from all parties, and unanimous addresses abounding in offers of lives and fortunes? If any English mob, composed of the disciples of Paine and Carlile, should dare to pull down a place of religious worship, to drive the minister from his residence, to threaten with destruction any other who should dare to take his place, would not the yeomanry be called out? Would not Parliament be summoned before the appointed time? Would there not be sealed bags and secret committees, and suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act? In Barbadoes, all this has been done. It has been done openly. It has not been punished. It is at this hour a theme of boasting and merriment. And what is the language of our rulers? 'We must not irritate them? We must try lenient measures. It is better that such unfortunate occurrences should not be brought before the Parliament!' Surely the mantle, or rather the cassock, of Sir Hugh Evans, has descended on these gentlemen:—'It is not meet the council hear a riot. There is no fear of Got in a riot. The council, look you, shall desire to have the fear of Got, and not to hear a riot.' We have outdone all the most memorable examples of patience. The Job of Holy Writ, the Griselda of profane romance, were but types of our philosophy. Surely our endurance must be drawing to a close.

We do not wish that England should drive forth her prodigal offspring to wear the rags and feed on the husks which they have desired. The Colonists have deserved such a punishment. But for the sake of the slaves, at least, and such as with them might innocently suffer, we should grieve to see it inflicted. That the slaves, when no longer restrained by our troops, would, in no very long time, achieve

their own liberation, cannot be doubted. As little do we doubt that such a revolution, violent as it would doubtless be, would be desirable, if it were the only possible means of subverting the present system. The horrors of a battle or a massacre force themselves upon our senses. The effects of protracted tyranny, the terror, the degradation, the blighted affections, the stunted intellects, the pining of the heart, the premature decay of the frame, are evils less obvious, but equally certain; and, when continued through successive generations, make up a greater sum of human misery than was ever inflicted in the paroxysm of any revolution. Still we cannot doubt that savages, rude in understanding, exasperated by injuries, intoxicated by recent freedom, would be much benefited by the wise and merciful controul of an enlightened people.

With respect to the West Indians in this country, we are convinced that there is not, in any quarter, a feeling unfriendly to them, or an indisposition to give a fair consideration to all the circumstances of their case. We call, therefore, for their support: they are our natural allies against the ruffians who wield the whip. The former class consists of men naturally solicitous to preserve the source from which they derive a part of their revenue: the latter is composed, in a great measure, of hungry adventurers, who are too poor to buy the pleasure of tyranny, and are therefore attached to the only system under which they can enjoy it gratis. The former wish to secure their possessions: the latter are mainly desirous to perpetuate the oppressive privileges of the white skin. Against those privileges we declare interminable war—war for ourselves, and for our children, and for our grand-children—war without peace—war without truce—war without quarter! But we respect the just rights of property as much as we detest the prerogatives of colour.

gatives of colour.

We entreat these persons to reflect on the precarious nature of the tenure by which they hold their property. Even if it were in their power to put a stop to this controversy—if the subject of slavery were no longer to occupy the attention of the British public—could they think themselves secure from ruin? Are no ominous signs visible in the political horizon? How is it that they do not discern this time? All the ancient fabrics of colonial empire are falling to pieces. The old equilibrium of power has been disturbed by the introduction of a crowd of new states into the system. Our West-India possessions are not now surrounded, as they formerly were, by the oppressed and impoverished colonies of a superannuated monarchy, in the last stage of dotage and debility; but by young, and vigorous, and warlike re-

publics. We have defended our colonies against Spain: does it therefore follow that we shall be able to defend them against Mexico or Hayti?

We are told that a pamphlet of Mr. Stephen, or a speech of Mr. Brougham, is enough to excite all the slaves in our colonies to rebel. What, then, would be the effect produced in Jamaica by the appearance of three or four black regiments, with thirty or forty thousand stands of arms? The colony would be lost. Would it ever be recovered? Would England engage in a contest for that object, at so vast a distance, and in so deadly a climate? Would she not take warning by the fate of that mighty expedition which perished in St. Domingo? Let us suppose, however, that a force were sent, and that, in the field, it were successful. Have we forgotten how long a few Maroons defended the central mountains of the island against all the efforts of disciplined valour? A similar contest on a larger scale might be protracted for half a century, keeping our forces in continual employment, and depriving property of all its security. The country might spend fifty millions of pounds, and bury fifty thousand men, before the contest could be terminated. Nor is this all. In a servile war, the master must be the loser—for his enemies are his chattels. Whether the slave conquer or fall, he is alike lost to the owner. In the mean time, the soil lies uncultivated; the machinery is destroyed; and when the possessions of the planter are restored to him, they have been changed into a desert.

Our policy is clear. If we wish to keep the Colonies, we must take prompt and effectual measures for raising the condition of the slaves. We must give them institutions which they may have no temptation to change. This is the only safeguard. You may renew all the atrocities of Barbadoes and Demarara. You may inflict all the most hateful punishments authorized by the insular codes. You may massacre by the thousand, and hang by the score. You may even once more roast your captives on slow fires, and starve them in iron cages, or flay them alive with the cart-whip. You will only hasten the day of retribution. Therefore we say, 'Let them go forth from the house of bondage. For wo unto you, if you wait for the plagues and the signs, the wonders and the war, the mighty hand and the out-stretched arm!'

If the great West-Indian proprietors shall persist in a different line of conduct, and ally themselves with the petty tyrants of the Antilles, it matters little. We should gladly accept of their assistance: but we feel assured that their opposition cannot affect, or now materially

retard, the ultimate result of the controversy. It is not to any particular party in the church or in the state; it is not to the right or to the left hand of the Speaker; it is not to the cathedral or to the meeting, that we look exclusively for support. We believe that on this subject the hearts of the English people burn within them. They hate slavery. They have hated it for ages. It has, indeed, hidden itself for a time in a remote nook of their dominions; but it is now discovered and dragged to light. That is sufficient. Its sentence is pronounced; and it never can escape! Never, though all the efforts of its supporters should be redoubled-never, though sophistry, and falsehood, and slander, and the jests of the pot-house, the ribaldry of the brothel, and the slang of the ring or fives' court, should do their utmost in its defence-never, though fresh insurrections should be got up to frighten the people out of their judgment, and fresh companies to bubble them out of their money-never, though it should find in the highest ranks of the peerage, or on the steps * of the throne itself, the purveyors of its slander, and the mercenaries of its defence!

^{*} This, we trust, is only matter now of past history. After the bright examples recently given to us of devotion to the cause of liberty by the illustrious House of Brunswick, we are unwilling to believe that any member of it should ever disgrace himself by becoming the advocate of Slavery or the Slave-trade.

II.

FROM THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW FOR OCTOBER 1829.

HISTORY tells of an individual, who believed he had travelled for seven years in foreign countries, and there done many notable acts, when the truth was that he had dipped his head into a pail of water and taken it out again. Very much like this is the history of that metaphorical personage, the type of all that is foolish and deceivable in nations, in whom under one bestial appellation is concentrated the description of the ignorance and gullibility of the British community. Believing himself to be wise, it is impossible to tell the time when he became a fool. He said, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knew not that he was wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' Puffed up with the idea that he was something, and somebody, he winked, and ran his head quietly into the endurance of such frauds as could never have befallen any body that was in the habit of walking with his eyes open, or was humble enough to conceive that he might possibly be made a dupe.

Not that the man positively would not take his fingers out of the fire when they were burning. On the contrary, nobody made more turmoil when he knew that he was hurt. But his coat might be taken off his back, by any body that would tell him a long story. He was a man of one idea, or at most of two; but it was only necessary to go as far as three, to leave him in utter bewilderment. For example: he knew well enough, that he did not like to be robbed and murdered himself. This was idea number one; and it is supposed that he had as clear a comprehension of it, as mathematicians have of Euclid. He had a glimmering, too, that it was not for his interest that people should be robbed and murdered somewhere else; provided it was in a neighbouring parish, or at all events in some parish where he apprehended a distant possibility that he might be murdered himself. But if it was further off than this, the question was too much for him. It was the triple idea, which he could never comprehend, that he could have any thing to do with felony where he never intended to adventure his own person. If an injury was done to himself, or to any person within the degree of third cousin, there was nobody that made a more exemplary bawling for the constable. When a woman

in his own neighbourhood had 'whipt two female 'prentices to death, and hid them in the coal-hole,' he thought hanging was too good for her; and there he stood, when the miserable wretch was brought out to just and necessary punishment, trying to overwhelm her sinful soul with more than dying horror, by adding at that fearful moment the expression of his unforgiveness and his hate. But when the same thing was done in a parish a little further off—and that not by accident her that are the same than the transmission of the same than the same than the same that the transmission of the same than the same than the same than the same that the same than the same that the same than dent, but as part and parcel of a system which the whole parish, with their overseers at their head, had risen up to defend—he quietly went home, and paid a tax to enable the like to be done again. He grumbled much of the hardness of times, and the difficulty an honest man had to live; but not one word did he say against the imposition of a poll-tax to enable the Esther Hibners * of the West Indies to ride, not in a cart, but in their coaches. On the contrary, he went home, and called his wife and children, and, after asking if they had said their prayers, he said to them, 'I have seen a woman hanged this morning. I was never so pleased in my life. And now send for some sugar for breakfast; and when you pay eleven-pence for the sugar, take care that you pay the penny for the West Indians.' It never occurred to him or his gaping brood—though, to say the truth, they were well-intentioned persons enough in their way—that their representatives, and every body's representatives, were taxing them and every body, not for any benefit that was to arise to them or the community, but simply that the proceeds of this taxation might find their way into the pockets of such persons as, in their own parish, they thought hanging was too good for. It was quite certain that these persons, and all the mischief and misery attendant on their system, existed solely because the people of Great Britain were taxed to pay for it, and could not exist without it. They were as clearly raised, supported, and kept in existence, by a rate They were as clearly raised, supported, and kept in existence, by a rate laid upon the people of Great Britain, as a poor-house or a county hospital. They could not pay for their whip-leather, unless an extra tax was laid on the produce of other British possessions, for the purpose of obliging the British consumer to put the difference into the pockets of the West Indians. The people of Great Britain, in fact—the same people who give themselves airs when they get into foreign parts, by reason of their freedom—pay a poll-tax for the support of slavery and slave-owners in the West Indies. But all this, the simple man and his brood would never have found out to their dying day. He would have been shocked if he had been asked to contribute to the maintenance

^{*} See Anti-Slavery Reporter, vol. iii p. 9.

of a receiver of stolen goods in his own street. If the parish-officer had come to intimate to him, that his wife and daughters were to be rated, to rebuild the houses of ill fame that were lately burnt at Temple Bar, all his reverence for the authorities would not have prevented him from knocking him down. But when he was to pay for the same kind of thing by instalments upon every piece of sugar the same wife and daughters put into their mouths, it was quite beyond him to find out, of his own pure brain, that there was any thing degrading in the affair. In short, he would have paid for a fire to roast his own father, and salt to eat him with, if it had only been put to him in the shape of a duty on faggots, or an exciseman in the salt-box.

There is not one word of jest or exaggeration in all this. It is a plain unadorned statement of what is taking place with every Englishman at every hour. The English people, high and low, hate slavery and injustice as much as any body does. They have had their hours of struggle, which have taught them why they hate them; and the issue of the contest has left them, in many respects, the foremost of the world in the general march of liberty and civilization. But they pay a poll-tax for no reason on earth but that the abettors of slavery in their Colonies may have whips, instead of no whips. They suffer themselves to be basely bullied—or, more properly, past ministries, from inward affection to the bad cause, have suffered themselves to be basely bullied as their representatives—by men whom they are at from inward affection to the bad cause, have suffered themselves to be basely bullied as their representatives—by men whom they are at the very moment paying to support. They allow the slave drivers in the West Indies to shake their hardened fists in every British face; and their agents in this country to cover with ribald abuse every honest man and woman who raises a voice in opposition: and all the while they are positively paying a penny in the shilling on all the sugar they eat, for no reason on earth but that the thing they hate may be carried on, and because it could not be carried on without it. If the West-Indian islands, with all their abominations, were to sink into the sea to-Indian islands, with all their abominations, were to sink into the sea tomorrow, the British people, instead of being losers, would be immense
gainers: they would be the gainers of all they now pay in the shape of
taxation for their support; which only goes to keep coaches for the agents
of the injustice, and buy boroughs to enable them to support their cause
in Parliament. The whole 'West-Indian body,' as they call themselves,
is nothing but one large fraud. Everything is a fraud which supports one
set of men upon the earnings of another. It is a robbery on a large
scale upon the people of England; who are plundered of the earnings
of their labour, and in return have the pleasure of seeing the 'WestIndian body' living upon their money. That this is true, is proved

by the fact, that the whole West-Indian system together cannot be carried on without being supported by a tax. Whip as he will, the slave-driver does not make both ends meet, till the people of England are taxed to pay the difference. They must be made to pay ten shillings a cwt. more for sugar than it can be got for in the East Indies or other places; and these ten shillings find their way into the West-Indian's pocket. It is clearly all a cheat, as much as ring-dropping. Out of nothing, nothing can come; and where men cannot get rich unless the people of England raise it for them by subscription, it is mere trick and legerdemain to point to their riches as increasing wealth. If part of the money finds its way into the hands of Government in the shape of further taxation, the real nature of the transaction is only like a government's proposing to get rich by levying a contribution on the gains of highwaymen. The tax, and the unjust gain of which it is a part, can only be taken from some honest man to begin with; which can make no gain in the aggregate. If ships and sailors are employed in the dishonest trade, they would also be employed in the honest trade as much. There would be just as much shipping employed in bringing home honest sugar, as sugar which the people is robbed to pay for. No man denies, or pretends to deny, the truth of all this. No man, with common regard for his own cause, will put down an assertion to the contrary on paper, which shall give an opportunity of displaying its fallacy piecemeal.

The colonists are in the habit of blustering about their "property,"

The colonists are in the habit of blustering about their "property," and their "vested rights." God knows what term of possession may give these men a right to a sanguinary wrong. But in his mercy he has made a nearer way; he has not left us to be troubled with the question. Do the West Indians set up any claim to our property? Do they advance any right to make us subscribe for the flogging of women in Jamaica? Is the House of Commons bound to impose such taxes for the support of slavery, 'as the planters will sanction?** If not, then the West Indians have overshot their mark. They have bullied and insulted an honest and a generous people; where their only chance for existence lay in conciliation and submission. They have talked loud of what they would do, and what they would not do; forgetting that all the time they hung by the mere thread of the volition of the English people, for doing any thing, or being any thing. Ministers, too, have existed, mean enough to play into the hands of

^{* &#}x27;With regard to the Sugar Colonies, settle the slave question in such a manner as the planters will sanction.'—Blackwood's Ed. Mag. July 1829, p. 115.

the originators of the fraud, and to speak as if there really was some difficulty in making the colonists accede to any terms the British government should intimate; knowing all the time that they exist but by the fiat of the government operating in the shape of exactions on the people. If the West Indians are unmanageable, stop their rations. If they can keep themselves, let them take their own way, like other people that can keep themselves. But if they cannot, then let them, like other paupers, submit to the directions of those that pay for them; and do not let us be troubled with the insolence and bad propensities of the great poor-house in the Antilles. If Helen Moss is to be supported by a rate upon the parish, Helen Moss shall be quiet, and have neither slaves nor apprentices to flog; or else Helen Moss shall be put on low diet, till she finds the difference between rubbing pepper into girls' eyes in the West Indies, and being insolent to honest men in England who are paying for her keep*.

What was, on the other hand, the case in London, when a criminal of the lowest order, this same Mrs. Hibner, whose crime was not aggravated by the consideration that she was possessed of information which ought to have taught her better, committed a similar offence? He was not the apologist of the vindictive feeling exhibited by the populace on the occasion; but it was well known that they departed from the humanity which they usually exhibited towards

^{*} See Anti-Slavery Reporter, vol. ii. p. 462. See also Extract from the Speech of Sir James Macintosh in the House of Commons, June 3, 1829: from the Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter for June 1829.—'The Hon. Member [Mr. H. Gurney] had had recourse to a species of argument respecting the case of the Mosses, which he remembered was used at the beginning of the debates on the proposed abolition of the slave trade. A great West-India proprietor said, on the occasion to which he had alluded, that the House might as well judge of the morals of England by the records of the Old Bailey, as judge of the character of the West-India planters from a few occurrences selected for the purpose of making an unfavourable impression on the public. To this Mr. Fox replied—" I do not wonder that the slave trade should remind the Hon. Gentleman of the Old Bailey. Nothing can be so congenial as the two subjects. Nevertheless I will point out to the Hon. Gentleman a contrast between them. At the Old Bailey we hear of crimes which shock our moral feelings; but we are consoled by the punishment of the criminals. We read of crimes as atrocious in the West-India islands, but our moral feelings are shocked at hearing, not only of the impunity of the criminals. but of their triumph." In adverting to the case of the Mosses, the Hon. Member had, most unfortunately for his argument, alluded to the case of Mrs. Hibner. The contrast which these cases presented between the moral feeling of the Bahamas and the moral feeling of this country was much more striking than the contrast to which Mr. Fox had formerly called the attention of the House. The offenders in the Bahamas having not only committed a murder, but committed it in the most barbarous manner possible, had been condemned to five months' imprisonment. What followed? A memorial had been presented to the Colonial Secretary, signed by what were called the most respectable persons in the colony, attesting that the character of these cruel murderers was generally one of great humanity, and praying for a remission of their punishment. That was the manner in which this atrocious crime was viewed in an island, the inhabitants of which were in no other way demoralized than as the possession of unbounded and irresponsible power always corrupted the heart of man. Nay, more, a public dinner, as a matter of triumph, was actually given, by the chief persons in the colony, to the criminals, who had barely escaped the most condign punishment for their offences.

The pretext might have done for the days of ignorance; but no minister in the present time would risk his credit, by intimating the existence of a difficulty in bringing the West Indians to any terms which the government, acting on behalf of the British community, should be pleased to propose. A minister who should do so now, would be hooted down—out of the House, if not in the House—as a man that had voluntarily come forward with a fraud in his hand and a falsehood in his mouth. If any minister has a reason to offer why the people of England should continue to pay a duty of 10s. a hundred-weight on sugar from their East-Indian colonies, in order that slavery may be paid for in the West, let him produce it; but if he loves his credit for common penetration and ordinary prudence, let him not risk the assertion that there is any difficulty in the removal of the slavery.

What a minister, desirous to do justice to the people of England, would manifestly do, would be to remove the extra duties in favour of West-Indian sugar, by a prospective act, to take effect six months after date; and then intimate to the blustering paupers of the West Indies, that when the Colonial legislatures had enacted, and effectually put into execution, every jot and tittle of what should be intimated to them from the government at home, the government at home would consider how far they would propose to the people of England the taking them again upon the pauper's list; and what portion of the labour of Englishmen should, upon sincere repentance and most abject and unreserved submission for past misconduct, be permitted to dribble into the pockets of the penitents. This is what every minister knows to be common sense and common honour; and there is nothing in the constitution of the present leaders of the country, to make it probable that they have any disinclination to act upon the knowledge.

In the present state of public information, it would be absurd for a minister to attempt to put forward the occupation of the West-Indian islands as a source of national wealth, when it is notorious that the whole establishment is maintained only by an impost on the public. There may have been a time when the wealth, the glories, the military

the unfortunate persons who underwent the last sentence of the law. They could not conceal their horror at a crime, which, however, was far less atrocious than that which had been committed by the respectable Mosses; and even rent the air with shouts of triumph, when they witnessed the payment of the dreadful penalty. In justice, however, to the people of London, he must observe, that he remembered only three instances in which they had thus deviated from their usual feelings of commiseration for suffering criminals; and those were all cases in which the punishment of death had been inflicted for the crime of murder accompanied with circumstances of peculiar cruelty. Thus, even in their errors, the generosity which belonged to their general character was strongly evinced.'

and naval power, which make their appearance on certain points in consequence of the retention of the West Indies, might have been advanced, and nobody have found out that they were all paid for by a greater diminution of wealth and power somewhere else. But 'the people are over-educated' for such an imposition now. The friends of slavery in the House of Commons should have stopped the progress of A, B, C, long ago; and as they did not, they must take the consequences. The West Indians have sometimes threatened to transfer their allegiance to America. If the Americans would take them on such terms, it would be policy for Great Britain to offer the Americans a million sterling a-year to consent to the arrangement, and she would be a great gainer by the bargain after all. A collection of paupers who should utter a threat that they would quit the parish, would not be half so welcome to put their threats in execution. The people of England are tired of the West Indians. They are tired, in the first place, of keeping them by public contribution; and they are tired of the insolence with which their misplaced charity has been returned.

Suppose the owner of a beast of burden were to disgust the public by the exhibition of base and malignant cruelty—as for instance, that

Suppose the owner of a beast of burden were to disgust the public by the exhibition of base and malignant cruelty—as, for instance, that he were seen beating it to death, and rubbing pepper into its eyes, as the ladies who are kept out of our money in the West Indies do to their slaves;—and that, on being interfered with by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or by any body else, he should harangue upon his right of property, and turn upon the interferers with injury and insult;—and suppose that after all it should be found out, that the very people whom he was bespattering were subscribing to find him the means by which he possessed himself of the animal in question; that, in fact, he had not the means of livelihood, except by the contributions of the people he was insulting:—how small would be the chance of such a ruffian for the continuation of his nuisance; and how crawling and utterly contemptible would be the advisers. be the chance of such a ruffian for the continuation of his nuisance; and how crawling and utterly contemptible would be the advisers, who should suggest the slightest difficulty in putting down his malpractices. Perhaps such a man might threaten, that, if he was interfered with, he would starve his victim altogether. Try him. Depend upon it there will be no danger. He will be as supple as a glove. The moment he is touched on the right place—the instant he perceives that he is understood and over-matched—his subserviency will be equal to his former violence. He will be your poor industrious jack-ass-driver—he will turn methodist, go to week-day prayers, sing psalms till his voice cracks, do any thing, that he thinks will tend to effect the prolongation of his pittance. Be assured that he will be the most

pathetic and obliging personage in the creation: his ass shall eat with him, sleep with him, if the gentlemen will be so kind as to think about continuing his half-a-crown a week. Just such will be the conduct of the people who have insulted us in the West Indies, if we can only pluck up heart to say a word about the stoppage of the parish pay. They will send a deputation to make an apology to every honest man that has been insulted by their hired press, and to give every honest woman a shaddock and a mamee-apple for her little boys, the moment they find themselves threatened with the stoppage of the allowance. Why are the people of England to support men they dislike, and be insulted in return? Why is every man and woman in this country to pay a poll-tax, amounting in the whole, in bounties and protecting duties, to not less than a million and a half a-year; with no earthly return but the pleasure of reading the advertisements in the West-Indian gazettes, and now and then the murder of a missionary by way of sauce piquante?

If the slave-owners pretend to deny the character of their system, there would be just as much chance for Esther Hibner to have persuaded the public of the nonentity of her crimes. Putting all individual testimony on one side, their own public acts afford a mass of evidence, which nobody that is not hired pretends to misunderstand. If there has been any softening in their practice, it is only as it has been forced upon them by the humanity of the British community: and the same humanity will force them to an end. If they have abandoned any particular cruelty, they grinned and scowled like Smithfield drovers forbidden to strike below the hock; and when a British minister proposed the abolition of the indecent whipping of women upon the field, they rose with one consent to say that this was their birth-right, and they would die by it. They could have submitted to any moderate and they would die by it. They could have submitted to any moderate interference from British tyranny, but this was a necessary of life, which, if Englishmen would not pay for, the allegiance of the West Indies must be at an end, and 'Old England' take the risk of—'doing without Barbadoes!' It is as clear as the day, that their system altogether is one which every Englishman, in his own person, knows it would be honour and glory to demolish by the bayonet. Every Englishman knows that the right of resistance to personal slavery is as clear and distinct a right, as that of resistance to the wild beasts of the forest. If this is not law, there is no law: it is time for every man to take his musquet, if he has one, and be a law unto himself. It is not men meeting together with certain forms, and calling themselves the Honourable this, or the Worshipful that, that can legalize what in its

own nature is contrary to the purposes for which human society is formed. It is true enough that the tiger may make laws, and define what punishments he will execute on those who shall resist him and fail. But it is not the less true that he and his laws are the enemies of the human race; and that no man is bound to obey them longer than he finds himself beneath the paw. If the West Indians were omnipotent in England to-morrow, they could not make one Englishman acknowledge that their rule, when applied to himself, was to be endured an hour longer than a bayonet could be got to point in opposition to it. If every man in England could be made hypocrite enough to deny this truth in words, he would not the less believe it in his heart. All honest men, in spirit, drink the great moralist's toast every day of their existence; and if every member of the House of Commons could be induced to exclaim against the impropriety, they would not do it less. Not a soldier or officer is sent to the colonies who does not know, that the only way of reconciling his service with the duty of an honest man, or the honour of a gentleman, is by considering himself as the guardian of the great acts of justice which must speedily take place. In any other light, he might as well be invited to patrole Hounslow in aid of the knights of the road, or form a cordon round the houses of the Marrs and the Williamsons, while the man with a hammer did his office inside. There is no use in a government, or any portion of the members of a government, setting themselves up against the acknowledged rules of justice and right on which all the submission of the community to them is dependent. The only consequence is, that so far as they succeed in impressing the public with this opinion of their acts, so far do they lose the benefit of every principle of obedience but fear. It may be necessary to obey a government that supports slavery by law; but it can never be desirable, longer than it is necessary. There is not one rule of right for a man here, and another somewhere else. The robbery that is detestable at Hounslow, does not become sanctified by degrees of west longitude. And so long as it is authorized any where, the direct inference is, that if men in other places are not subjected to the same treatment, it is only because their own physical force stands between them and the infliction. A government where the people can be taxed to support slavery abroad, and a part of the plunder expended in buying rotten boroughs to support the iniquity at home, is clearly one that needs a root-and-branch re-formation, on the naked principle of self-defence in the community. If governments do not like root-and-branch reformations, they should cut off the gratuitous iniquities which induce the danger; and not give

food to the cry for radical reform, for the sake of a dinner to ministers from the 'West-Indian body.'

The Colonists have tried to frighten the Government and the country, by holding out the necessity that, in the event of the emancipation of their slaves, they should be paid for them; and some of the friends of emancipation have been weak enough to shew an inclination to admit the principle. Suppose now, that an Irish pauper, in the days when Irishmen worked their horses by the tails, had been interfered with by the parish officers with a view to put an end to his barbarous practice, and had answered, 'If your honours stop my allowance till I give over working my horse by the tail, I hope you mean to pay me what I gave for him, and allow me to work him in harness besides.' This is a fair statement of the West-Indian proposition. Every body knows, that what they demand to be paid for, is the mere pleasure of working by the tail; it is simply the gratification of those evil lusts and passions, which can be gratified under a system of slavery, and cannot be gratified so well under a system of free labour. What we pay a poll-tax for, is simply that the West Indians may have the luxury of the whip. We pay for the pleasurable titillation excited in colonial nerves by the exercise of the constitutional right of the flogging of women. And if we decline paying for this, we are invited, as a point of justice, to lay down the sum that was given for the thing flogged; upon the principle, apparently, that, if not flogged, the use intended from it is at an end. The people of England are undeniably very weak upon some points; but it is to be hoped they will never be so weak, as to think of paying for the horse, as the price of working him in harness instead of by the tail.

The claim for payment being demonstrably a fraud, it is plain that an honest minister would have nothing to do but to stop the disgraceful tax endured by the people of this country, till the West-Indian governments comply in the fullest manner with every intimation that should be made to them. Nobody is afraid of ministers' going too far: the only difficulty is in raising a force of opinion to make them go far enough. And nobody doubts the desirableness of the alterations being made by the Colonial governments, or their superior aptitude for executing them. When, therefore, they have emancipated, or put in a direct course of emancipation within such period as the Government should suggest, the whole of their Negro population, it would be quite time enough to think of returning to the poll-tax. By all means let them do it with the deliberation they shall find necessary. Let them reflect well upon the difficulties that are in the way, and do

nothing hastily, rashly, or unadvisedly; but, in the mean time, let the people of England be free from the poll-tax.

It would be an insult, at this time of day, to ask the English people whether slavery is an evil or not; they might just as well be asked the question, of house-breaking. Even the poor peasant and manufacturer, who are trodden down by the effect of bad laws till their actual mess of pottage is of smaller dimensions than that of the slave in the West Indies, are capable of appreciating the injury of the plea, which tells them that their condition would be improved if they and their children were made saleable, like beasts. This is what would be done, if their own physical force did not prevent it; so far, at least, as depends on those who support the remoter evil. The same hired press that takes those who support the remoter evil. The same hired press that takes the side of slavery in the colonies, would take the side of reducing the working population of England to the same slavery, if any body saw chance enough of effecting the object to make it worth while to pay. Esther Hibner might have had it on her side, if she could have taken two hundred copies of a Sunday paper weekly. As it is, the slave-owners are content with levying about two shillings annually from every individual of the starving labourer's family. A good meal once a quarter, is taken from the haggard wife and the starving child; because, without it, there would be no possibility of carrying on the flogging of women in the colonies. The object is not to debate whether this is an evil, but to excite men to union and perseverance in abating the nuisance. When suffering men are taxed, the ordinary assumption is, that it is for some benefit that is to arise to the community. But here the object is simply and solely, that bad men may riot in the pleasures of injustice; and that the sixpences, abstracted quarterly from the industrious and the poor, may be clubbed together, in the shape of carriages and good dinners, for the owners of slaves in the West Indies. Indies.

There *must* be an end of the system of robbing one man to keep another; and in no place can it so properly begin, as where, in addition to the simple robbery, the whole thing supported is hateful in itself. The time is past when men could be deterred from pursuing such an object, by the apprehension of insult from the defenders of the wrong. Such insults are honours; and there is no individual so mean, as to be unable to aspire to a portion of the credit. The poorest man in England can raise a voice somewhere, against the system which taxes his family by the head, in support of the injustice he has learnt from his forefathers to hate. The pith and marrow of the whole system lie in the convenience of the higher classes taking the work of the

lower without paying for it. The higher classes find it the pleasantest thing in the world, to be worked for and not to pay, or to pay only as much as they choose; and the poor man is to be taxed in his basket and in his store, that what cannot be wrung from the black slave abroad, may be made up by the white one at home.

The people of the West Indies seem to labour under an utter ignorance of the light in which their system altogether is viewed in England. When West-Indian magistrates apply the term 'wretch' to a Negro who is put to death for having failed in an attempt at resistance, the people of England do not consider him as a 'wretch,' but as a good and gallant man, dying in the best of causes,—the resistance to oppression, by which themselves hold all the good that they enjoy. They consider him as a soldier fallen in the advance-guard of that combat, which is only kept from themselves, because somebody else is exposed to it further off. If the murdered Negro is a 'wretch,' then an Englishmen is a 'wretch,' for not bowing his head to slavery whenever it invites him. The same reason that makes the white Englishman's resistance virtuous and honourable, makes the black one's too;it is only a regiment with different facings, fighting in the same cause. Will these men never know the ground on which they stand? Can nothing make them find out, that the universal British people would stand by and cheer on their dusky brethren to the assault, if it was not for the solitary hope that the end may be obtained more effectually by other means? It is not true that the people of England believe that any set of men, here or any where, can by any act of theirs alter the nature of slavery, or make that not robbery which was robbery before. They can make it robbery according to law-the more is the pity that the power of law-making should be in such hands; but this is the only inference. All moral respect for such laws - all submission of the mind, as to a rule which it is desirable to obey and honourable to support-is as much out of the question, as if a freebooter were to lay down a scale of punishment for those who should be found guilty of having lifted a hand against his power.

When the question, with what the West Indians have to answer, has been so long and amply debated by the press in various forms, it would be superfluous to enter into an examination of all the arguments which have been advanced to shew that Englishmen with dark faces should be slaves. The principal ones now insisted on, are two; First, that all the opponents to slavery are hypocrites; and, Secondly, that the produce of the other distant possessions of Great

Britain (as, for instance, East-Indian sugar) is equally raised by the labour of slaves.

Now supposing it were actually true, that every man who takes a prominent part in opposition to the continuance of slavery in the West Indies was a hypocrite at heart;—that it was the real and veritable fact, that every such man had a colony of his own, where he was only waiting for the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, to see the "removal of many objections to that system" in his own peculiar establishment: -in what manner would that make it desirable that Englishmen should pay a poll-tax for the support of slavery in the West Indies? And suppose, again, it was actually true-which it is not -that the produce of the East Indies was raised by the labour of slaves, as well as of the West; -in what manner would that make it desirable that the people of England should pay a poll-tax to support the produce of the West? Supposing they were both villanies alike, what reason would there be for the people of England paying a poll-tax for the sake of supporting one villany in preference to another villany? There is nothing like this at the Old Bailey. Nobody pays a poll-tax in order that the receiver of stolen goods in the Minories may flourish in preference to him of Houndsditch. The arguments are no arguments, even when the facts assumed are admitted in their fullest extent; still less when they are utterly false and unfounded. Nobody believes that the dislike to keeping a carriage for Esther Hibner proceeds from hypocrisy. Nobody believes that cultivation is carried on by slaves in the East, as it is in the West. If so, where are the slavelaws, and where are the advertisements in the gazettes? The natives of India, in their own extraordinary English, advertise every thing else that can possibly be bought or sold: how is it that they never advertise slaves? There is not a common soldier that arrives from India, that is not capable of bearing testimony to the flagrant falsehood of the assertion that India is cultivated by slaves. If it was, the East-India Company would not hold possession long enough to send a despatch to the Governor-General. It is true, that, among the innumerable tribes and castes that compose the immense population of India, vestiges of slavery may be found. The writer of this has been eight years in India, and once saw a girl, who was said to have been sold by her parents in her infancy, as the means of escaping from famine. But there was no law that enforced any results from such a fact. To have gone before a British magistrate with any plea founded on such a claim, would have been as absurd in India, as it would six

years afterwards, when the same girl was in England. This is what the West Indians trust to. It would not be much trouble to the governors of India at home, to send out fives lines in a despatch, disavowing all recognition of the state of personal slavery throughout their vast domains; and they have as manifest an interest in doing it, as in sending to inquire the price of cotton.

After these, come the counsellors, who advise the postponing of the attempt to remove the West-Indian nuisance, till it can be clearly proved that there are no nuisances elsewhere; being, in point of wisdom and excellent judgment, on a par with him who should recommend the not killing a flea in Grosvenor Square, till it can be ascertained that there are none in Monmouth Street. It may be quite true, that the people of England are suffering in countless ways; that no man can look out of his window without seeing urgent calls for his interference and his charity; -but how does this make it desirable that the West Indians should be supported by a poll-tax? Has any body demonstrated what balance there is between the community's being oppressed (for instance) by the Corn Laws, and being indulged with the privilege of supporting the West-Indian body? How one tends to remedy the other; or why, if one cannot be got rid of for the present, the other should not, if it can? Men never make such arguments as this for nothing. Some portion of the plunder drains into their mouths; or they live in hope that it may drain hereafter. They are the warier confederates in the fraud; not bold enough to be put forward as the prime agents themselves, but anxious to deserve well of their community by exerting their small talents to confound the right.

The upshot and conclusion is, to call upon men of all classes to lay aside for a moment their differences in politics and in religion, and join in removing from us and ours this foul disgrace upon a nation calling itself free. To-morrow, tug at each other's throats, if it must be so; but to-day let there be a 'truce of God,'—a suspension of arms, like that under which the besiegers and besieged meet, to remove the carcase that is spreading plague on both. There are certain things on which, it would appear, mankind were made to differ; but there are also certain things on which, it is sure, that they were made to agree. In such a cause, let the Church-of-England-man follow his bishops, and the Sectary remember only the murder of his missionary in Demarara. Let the emancipated Catholic reflect, how closely allied have been the principles of the present question and of his own, and well consider the sound policy there would be in driving his enemies from the position they have occupied beyond. All creatures

of ill omen-every odious and foul bird, that has threatened any body or tormented any body-take roost and harbour in the question of West-Indian slavery, and sit there in readiness to pounce on the first exposed member of liberty at home. All that is good and distinguished in the country, is against them; and waits only to be joined by the momentum of a united community, to give the one cheer more, which will be the last. Never mind a little obloquy: nobody cares for the reviling of the individuals on whom society is putting force, nor of those who back them. It is a part of their unhappy state and condition; you would not be an honest man, if they had nothing to say against you. Reject, with utter scorn, all requests that you will abstain from letting the sufferers know what you think of their oppressors. You are not part of the plot; you are on the other side: there is no fairness in telling you, that you must hold your tongue, or else your adversaries will be 'exceedingly uncomfortable.' Say boldly, that you act with the express design to spread the information, that you and your countrymen are in motion on the other side of the Atlantic. All these things, in one way or another, go to your suffering comrades in Jamaica in the end; and tend to increase the pressure which will finally remove your wrong and theirs. There is not an old woman that gives sixpence to the cause of Negro freedom in England, that does not make the heart of a slave-owner sink within him. If the slave-owners can be kept upon old women's sixpences, they can be pulled down by old women's sixpences. The contributions of the people are never despised, except when they are to be made an honest use of. Omit no means, however trivial, that may evince your sense of wrong, and tend to multiply it. When a comedian makes a lucky hit, his grotesque figure in cheap clay displays itself on the chimneypiece of half the working men in England. Make a figure of a Negro woman, and write under it, "We still pay a poll-tax to support the flogging of women in Jamaica." And when you can add to it the date of the removal of the evil, leave it to your posterity, as a proof that their fathers, though humble, were not mean; that, though poor, they were much too good to be worked in their own country, for the sake of enabling the rich to work slaves in another.

Ellerton and Henderson, Printers, Gough Square, London.



FIRST REPORT

OF THE

ROCHESTER AND CHATHAM

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

AT A MEETING

HELD AT

THE SUN INN. CHATHAM.

APRIL 28th, 1828.

STROOD:

PRINTED BY J. AND H. SWEET, 28, HIGH-STREET,

1828.

PRESIDENT,

PIERCE EDGECUMBE, ESQ.

TREASURER.

SAMUEL WHEELER.

SECRETARY,

WILLIAM TATUM.

11

COMMITTEE,

GEORGE ACWORTH. THOMAS ATKINSON. THOMAS BURR. WILLIAM DREWETT. JOHN FORD. ROBERT GEORGE. WILLIAM GILES, JUN. ROBERT HORSNAILL, Jun. CHARLES HORSNAILL. D. B. LEWIS. W. H. MABBS. RICHARD MARSH. JAMES NICKALLS. THOMAS NICKALLS. CAPT, PUDNER. JAMES SMITH. GEORGE SKINNER. ROBERT STYLES. JOSEPH TATUM. LAMBERT WESTON. GEORGE WHITE. JOSEPH YOUNG.

At the Second General Meeting of the Rochester & Chatham Anti-Slavery Society, held at the Sun Inn, Chatham, 28th of April, 1828,

PIERCE EDGECUMBE, ESQ. IN THE CHAIR,

The Report of the Committee having been read,

It was unanimously Resolved,-

1st. That the Report of the Committee which has been read be received by this Meeting, and that it be printed and circulated in these towns and neighbourhood.

2nd. That the case of upwards of 800,000 of our fellow-creatures still held in slavery in the Colonies of Great Britain, in opposition to every principle of justice, to the dictates of the Christian religion, and to the maxims of our free Constitution, demands the hearty commiseration of this meeting.

3rd. That this Meeting views with extreme regret the continued opposition and neglect manifested in the late proceedings of the West Indian Authorities, relative to the measures proposed by our Government for ameliorating the state of Slavery, and for its ultimate extinction.

4th. That, seeing it is in vain to expect any material change in the state of things in our Colonial Dependencies, by any acts of the Colonists themselves, it becomes the duty of the people of this country to press upon the Imperial Legislature the necessity of adopting a more determined course, for remedying the evils of the West Indian System, and for raising the Negroes to a participation of those rights and privileges to which, as subjects of the British crown, they are entitled.

5th. That, in addition to the Measures of Reform already proposed by Government, it appears expedient to call the attention of

the Legislature to the appointment of a certain day after which all children of Negroes shall be born free.

6th. That, in the judgment of this Meeting, the bounties and protecting duties on Sugar have a direct tendency to support and perpetuate the evils of Slavery, as they enable the Planters to continue the present inhuman and impolitic system, and to counteract the wishes and efforts of the Government and people of these Kingdoms for the improvement and final emancipation of the Slaves; and at the same time subject the consumers of Sugar to an oppressive tax, in the increased price of that article; and that it is therefore our indispensible duty to solicit their repeal.

7th. That Petitions to both Houses of Parliament, framed upon the foregoing Resolutions, be forthwith prepared and put into a proper channel for presentation.

8th. That Pierce Edgecumbe, Esq. be requested to continue the office of President; Samuel Wheeler that of Treasurer; and that William Tatum be the Secretary; and the following gentlemen the Committee, for the year ensuing.—For the names, see 2nd page.

PIERCE EDGECUMBE,

The Chairman having left the Chair,

It was further Resolved,-

9th. That the acknowledgments of this Meeting be given to Pierce Edgecumbe, Esq. for presiding over the Society, and for his kind assistance in the chair this evening.

FIRST REPORT

OF THE

Rochester and Chatham

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

Those who feel an interest in the mitigation of the State of Slavery in our West Indian Colonies, and its final annihilation, like those who laboured to promote the Abolition of the Slave Trade, have to meet with many and various disappointments in the prosecution of their work. They find that interest, sordid interest, (although, in this case mistaken in its direction,) opposes itself to every effort in the cause of justice and humanity, and obstinately contends the ground with the friends of its oppressed victims. Like those however who were engaged in that noble work, and encouraged by the success which finally crowned their persevering endeavours, it is our duty to press forward, assured that the cause which we advocate, being that of justice, humanity, and sound policy, must eventually succeed.

It is with regret that the Committee of the Rochester and Chatham Anti-Slavery Society have to observe, that during the time which has elapsed since its formation, very little has been done towards the accomplishment of the great object in view,—" The Mitigation and final Abolition of Slavery;"—and we are still without any period to which we may look forward for the termination of Colonial Bondage: no decisive and effectual measures being yet taken towards this great and necessary end.

During the session of parliament of 1825-6, the voice of the British people was lifted up against Slavery by petitions, which in number and signature exceeded all precedent; nothing however of a decisive character was done; ministers being desirous of averting the interference of the legislature at home, till they had tried the effect of another expedient, that of sending out bills to the colonial assemblies, embodying the regulations of the orders in council, for their "Adoption, Rejection, or Modification." The result of this measure was such as might have been anticipated; the bills were in most instances rejected by the colonial legislatures; and although some of them have since gone into a revision of their Slave laws in consequence, they have either left untouched most of the principal causes of complaint, or framed their enactments so as to be of little real Thus the execution of the humane and just benefit to the Slaves. intentions of the English government and people is delayed, and unless our legislature interfere in a more decided manner, is likely to be delayed, to an indefinite period; while the hapless Negro and his posterity will continue to groan under the lash of tyranny and oppression.

But although scarcely any thing is yet effected of real importance, the subject is very much at rest as to its effect on the public mind. Many are lulled into indifference by an apprehension that much is already done, and that a train of measures is pursuing for the accomplishment of what remains to do; and others are seduced into a belief that the situation of the Slaves is not so bad as has been represented. There is, however, abundant proof, supplied by West Indians themselves, that their state is such as if it were fully known, could not be tolerated by a free and humane people. for the present the question of treatment, Slavery itself exists, and it is against Slavery, that our efforts are to be directed; -against the system which gives man an almost uncontrolled power over his fellow man; -which suffers him to work him as he pleases-to supply him with what food and clothing he thinks proper-to torture him at his caprice; -which gives to marriage no legal sanction, nor enacts any laws to preserve it from violation; -allows of the separation of the husband from the wife, and the mother from her children; -which provides no means of religious instruction, but on the day which should be employed for that purpose, forces the Slave to work for his own support; -- which reduces man to a level with the beast, and entails upon his hapless offspring the like degradation ;-

and having thus reduced the Negro in the scale of existence, charges upon him the moral debasement of which it has been itself the cause: and refuses to receive his evidence in a court of justice, in any case where a white person is concerned; thus subjecting him to cruelty, insult, and wrong of every kind and degree; which, if perpetrated in the presence of Slaves only, can receive no redress .- A system which, while it is thus productive of bodily suffering and mental degradation to its unhappy victims, and causes an alarming decrease in their numbers, also hardens the hearts of their oppressors, and renders them indifferent to those feelings which distinguish men from the brute creation. Nor is this all; cultivation by Slaves deteriorates the soil, and drives those who are dependent upon it to the necessity of enhancing the prices of its productions by artificial means, in order to save themselves from that ruin which must be the consequence of adhering to a system, subversive of the natural rights of man, counteracting the gracious designs of a beneficent Creator, and therefore marked by the intelligible signs of his displeasure.

The Committee will now proceed to make a few observations respecting the course which it appears to be our duty to pursue in the present state of the question. We have seen the part taken by our government during nearly five years since Slavery obtained the serious consideration of parliament. Strong recommendations were first sent out, accompanied with the expression of an earnest wish that the colonists themselves might proceed to measures for remedying the evils complained of. These were followed by copies of the orders in council, containing the regulations proposed for the adoption of the Colonial Assemblies. The recommendations, as well as the proposed alterations contained in the orders, were, with very little exception, either treated with neglect, or met by the most determined opposition. Nor has the latest measure of our ministers, the sending out bills to the colonies, been attended with much better success.

Thus it appears that the West Indians, while they look to this country for a market for their products, and for protection and defence—not only from foreign enemies, but from their own Slave population—are treating with indifference or hostility, the proposals of our government, and the wishes of their fellow subjects, when these have any tendency to lessen their power over their unhappy. Slaves, or to promote their ultimate emancipation.

It is therefore clear, that if we wait till effectual measures for the attainment of our end are taken by the colonial legislatures, many years will elapse without any material change taking place in the state of the Slave population. It becomes then a subject for the consideration of the British public, whether other means of promoting the desired object are not within their reach. They have already urged the necessity of decisive steps being taken for the remedy of these evils; they have represented to the legislature their earnest desire for the removal of this stain from the national character; yet no effect, at all commensurate with the exigencies of the case, has been produced.

Now, it is a fact that the Slavery of our Sugar Colonies derives no inconsiderable encouragement from bounties and protecting duties; about three shillings per hundred weight being paid by government upon all sugars exported from this country in a refined state, and an additional duty of ten shillings per hundred weight being laid upon sugars, the produce of free labour in the East. The effect of these measures together is to enhance the price of sugar, at least a penny per pound; and it is chiefly by this means that the planters are enabled to persevere in their present system of cultivation by Slaves; and as they are themselves for the most part resident in this country, the management of these, as well as the rest of their affairs, is committed to agents and overseers; who in general exercise over the poor Negroes an undefined, and almost unlimited authority. The evils of Slave-cultivation and non-residence, must, it is believed, have given way ere now to an ameliorated and less expensive system of cultivation by free labour, the introduction of cattle and implements of husbandry, and of a more economical plan of management, had it not been for the artificial support of bounties and protecting duties; which, considerable as it is, and great as is the sacrifice which it occasions to the consumers of sugar in the United Kingdom, is yet insufficient, in a large number of instances, to indemnify the planter from loss. Such is the effect of an adherence to the old system of doing every thing by the muscular labour of the poor Negro, working under the lash, and denied those incitements to voluntary exertion which the free labourer possesses. Seeing then, that Slavery derives a support so important from the measures above alluded to, and that by them every consumer of West India sugar is made to contribute to its continuance, is it not our duty, whilst we respectfully urge upon our legislature the necessity of more decisive measures, to represent also our hostility to

bounties and protecting duties, and earnestly to solicit their repeal? that thus the sugar and other commodities, the produce of free labour in our Eastern empire, may be admitted to a free competition with those of the Slave-cultured islands; and that we may be relieved from the necessity of contributing (although unwillingly) to the support of practices, equally at variance with our best feelings, and the mild and benign precepts of the religion we profess. But while we deplore the continuance of colonial Slavery-while its victims are the objects of our sincere commisseration-and while it is our indispensable duty to persevere in our endeavours to spread the knowledge of their wrongs, in order, if possible, that the whole population of these kingdoms may be interested in their cause, there is another means which, were it generally adopted by the friends of the oppressed Slaves, and recommended by them to all under their influence, would, it is believed, prove a powerful auxiliary in the Anti-Slavery work; tending to convince the West Indians of the necessity of submitting to the wishes and intreaties of the government and people of Britain. The Committee allude to the abstinence from the use of sugar and other articles cultivated by Slaves, and the substitution in their stead of those which are the produce of free labour. Such a measure is most strongly recommended by the London Anti-Slavery Society as being likely, if generally adopted, to have a powerful effect in promoting the great object in view. Nor let any suppose that such a measure would increase the misery of the Slaves: on the contrary it would have a direct tendency to diminish it, since whatever conduces to lessen the demand for Slavegrown produce, has the effect of diminishing the toil of the Slave. by lessening the temptation of the master to overwork him, and shorten the time allowed him to labour for his own support: * it being remembered, that he works without wages, and is chiefly maintained by his own exertions, on the day which should be appropriated to rest and religious instruction, and on certain other days allowed him in the course of the year.

The refusal to use the produce of Slavery is a measure which the impolitic conduct of the West Indians, in pertinaciously adhering

^{*} Although Slaves may be illused and oppressed when, in consequence of a decrease in the demand, their labour is comparatively unproductive; yet it is argued, that the tendency of such a decrease, and of the consequent reduction of prices, is to lessen their toil, and to promote their comfort, as well as their

to all the errors of their system, compels the friends of the Anti-Slavery cause to recommend; and which need only be pursued till they shall be aroused, by the voice of humanity, by a true sense of their own interests, and by the wishes of their fellow subjects, to take measures for effecting a radical change.

The Committee, soon after the General Meeting, prepared and circulated an address explanatory of the objects of the Society. They have since put into circulation four tracts, containing information on subjects connected with the Anti-Slavery cause.

They have maintained a correspondence with the London Anti-Slavery Society, and continue to receive monthly, copies of the Anti-Slavery Reporter. Conceiving that the interests of the cause in which they were engaged would be materially benefited by the formation of a Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association, the Committee took measures in the autumn of the year 1826, for the attainment of this object, and have the satisfaction to state that they were attended with success.

increase and emancipation; while the tendency of an increased demand, and of the advance in prices which will follow, is to stimulate the master to fresh exactions, and thus to render the burdens of the Slaves more oppressive, and their emancipation more difficult.

It is a remarkable fact, and strikingly tends to prove the truth of this position, that in those colonies where the soil is most fertile, and the profits of the planters consequently greatest, and where the largest quantity of sugar is produced in proportion to the numbers of the Slave population, the greatest waste of Negro life takes place. This appears by the official returns from the colonies, from which it may suffice, by way of example, to select the following:—

In the Bahamas, the soil being poor, no sugar is grown, and here the Slaves increase at the rate of 2 to $2\frac{\pi}{2}$ per cent. per annum.

In Barbadoes, where the average annual produce is $3\frac{\tau}{2}$ cwt. to each Slave, there is a small yearly increase of about 1-3rd to $\frac{\tau}{2}$ per cent.

In Trinidad, the soil being very fertile, each Slave produces upon an average about 12 cwt. of sugar annually, and here Slaves decrease at the alarming rate of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum.

Now if it were true that the comfort and happiness of the Slaves increased in proportion to the increase of profit yielded to their masters, by an augmented growth of sugar, it would follow that the Slaves of Trinidad must be better off, and consequently increase faster than those of the Bahamas and Barbadoes; the fact however is exactly the reverse of such a conclusion.—See also Tract No. 4, of your Society.

The amount of Subscriptions and Donations received by your Treasurer, and the manner of their expenditure is as follows:—

Collections at the Meeting at the Sun Tavern	Sundry Expenses attending the Meeting at the Sun Tavern. Paid for the Anti-Slavery Reporter, and other Publications. Printing Tracts, &c
£45 5 7	£45 5 7

Audited by ROBERT STYLES, and 20th 3rd Mo. 1828.

Notwithstanding all the information which has been diffused, our ears are yet assailed with the so often refuted assertion, "That the Slaves are better off than our peasantry." It is not the intention of the Committee to enter at large into an examination of the validity of such an assertion, they therefore refer their readers to a pamphlet written by Thomas Clarkson, to Nos. 5, 7, and 17, of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, and to the Gazettes of the Colonies, for a full refutation. They will only add an extract from a letter on this subject, which appeared in the New Times of November 7th, 1826. "If we wish to have an adequate view of the utter falsehood of the statement that the Slaves are better off than the peasantry of Great Britain, let us only imagine that the police and institutions of Jamaica, for example, were transferred to this country. Let us only suppose, that in England every proprietor of land, or of manufactories; every bailiff or overseer, or head of an establishment, having servants under him; every attorney, guardian, executor, or administrator, connected with such an establishment; every overseer of a workhouse, and every keeper of a gaol, might legally at his own discretion, and without assigning a reason for so doing, for any offence, real or imaginary, a misconstrued word, a misunderstood look, or from the mere wantonness of power, cause to be stripped naked, and fixed prone to the earth, any or all of the men, women, or children, employed under him, and either publicly

or privately inflict upon them twelve, twenty, twenty-five, or thirtynine lacerations of the cart whip, and then subject the sufferers with their bleeding wounds to the stocks and hard labour at pleasure: let us suppose too, that all these different proprietors and functionaries had the power of delegating to their underlings, their foremen and turnkeys, the same privilege of flogging, though to a more limited extent; let us further suppose, that the whole of the labouring class were debarred by law from giving evidence in the case of any abuse of power committed by their superiors, and though allowed in such a case to prefer a complaint before a magistrate, (the magistrate being liable himself to have similar complaints preferred against him before his brother magistrates,) yet if they failed in proving the truth of their complaints by evidence that was admissible, they might be punished with thirty-nine lashes at the discretion of the magistrate, for the very act of complaining; suppose, moreover, a driver armed with a whip, to be placed over our reapers in the field, or our spinners in the cotton mill, which whip he might apply at his pleasure, to quicken industry, or to punish neglect, and that neither their time nor their rate of exertion, nor the choice of their employment, nor the kind or measure of their food, or of their clothing. nor their hours of rest, nor their hours of labour were their own, but nnder the absolute direction and control of their master or overseer. and for the sole benefit of others without wages; -suppose all this. and what should we think of the state of our peasantry? And what would they think of it?

"It is obvious that such a state of things, if it could be supposed for one moment to exist in this country, must give birth to innumerable abuses, at least as many as in the West Indies; probably more. We do not believe that those who administer the West India system are guilty of greater cruelty and inhumanity than would inevitably be practised by the generality of people among ourselves, were they to be cursed with the same system transferred to England. Even with all the protection which equal laws can afford, with an enlightened and disinterested magistracy, with a press perfectly free, and with the control of public opinion, abuses are still to be found amongst us. But supposing these important guards to be taken away, and that only every fifteenth man in the community was capable of giving evidence of wrongs committed, would any man in his senses predicate of the people of this country that they were a happy people? And do the West Indians so far exceed us in

high moral principle; are they such superhuman and angelic beings, that with them such a constitution of things, instead of being pregnant (as it ever must be when administered by men) with misery to its subjects, should be productive only of happiness and enjoyment?"

Before the Committee close their Report, they will make a few observations respecting remuneration. It is strongly argued by the avowed friends of Slavery, as well as by some who appear to be desirous of its abolition, that if we intend to abolish Slavery, we have an undoubted right to indemnify the planters for any loss they may sustain by the proposed change. In answer to this, it may not be amiss to state, that the abolitionists have not the most remote idea of an immediate liberation; they are desirous of the adoption of measures for the amelioration of Slavery, and for raising the Slave from that state of deep degradation into which the rigorous treatment of his white superiors has plunged him; and of securing his emancipation at the earliest period compatible with his welfare, and a just consideration of the safety and interests of those who are unhappily involved in the Slave system. In considering the subject of remuneration, let it be constantly borne in mind, that the Slaves are those to whom real injustice has been done, and to whom it continues to be done every moment they are held in bondage, beyond the time necessary, under the influence of active and decisive measures, in order to prepare them for their freedom.

Freedom is the natural right of every man; this right is accorded him by his Creator, and cannot be either taken from him in the first instance, or afterward withheld from him, without flagrant injustice; unless he forfeit it by some act against the laws of the land. We have heard much from the West Indians and their friends of their right to remuneration; but what remuneration do they propose to make to the Slave for the years he has spent in their service? a service made rigorously and needlessly bitter, by their caprice or neglect.

To persons whose eyes are not blinded by interest, it must appear, that justice demands the adoption of prompt and decisive measures for the extermination of Slavery, whatever loss may be incurred by the change: and when such measures are taken, when justice is done to the Slave, then is the time for the planter, if he can prove a loss, to urge his claims upon the consideration of his fellow subjects;

inasmuch as they, by sanctioning him in the original perpetration of the wrong, and suffering him so long to continue it, have become a party with him therein. In considering these claims, it must nevertheless be remembered, that the nation at large has been long taxed to enable him to hold his Slaves in bondage. The West Indies having cost this country more than a million and a half annually for naval and military defence and other contingencies: besides the increased price paid to him for his sugar, through the operation of bounties and protecting duties, as above stated. Could the ground be shifted, so that the sum now paid to the planter, to enable him to maintain his hold upon the Slaves, should go to indemnify him for any loss he might happen to sustain by the measures adopted for their emancipation, it might be proper for the nation quietly to submit. But surely they ought not to withhold the exexpression of their utmost reprobation, at being by the present arrangement made parties to a system which they justly detest, and at being obliged to contribute so largely to its support. It may also be further observed, that while the planters obstinately resist the adoption of the ameliorating measures, and treat the opinions of their fellow countrymen, and the strong recommendations of the government with opposition and contempt, they are no more entitled to any remuneration as matter of consideration (although it is not intended in the main to oppose it) than, upon the broad basis of the question, they are empowered to demand it, upon the score of justice.

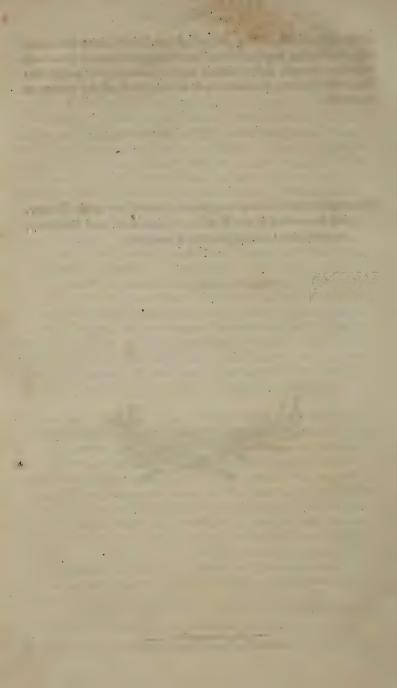
In conclusion of their Report, the Committee are desirous of reminding the friends of the oppressed slaves, that unless they firmly and perseveringly pursue the course which has been begun, by a continued endeavour to spread among the people at home accounts of the real state of things in the West Indies, both as respects the existing laws for the government of the slave population, and their actual state of degradation, civil and religious; such is the power of the West Indian body-such the influence they possess, and so various the means they are using to counteract the effects of our exertions, and to prevent the adoption of measures which they view as opposed to their interests, that in all probability they will succeed in infusing a spirit of lukewarmness into the hearts of the British public, and in procrastinating every measure which tends to the consummation which we have in view:-The raising the Negro from the moral debasement to which West Indian bondage has reduced him, and preparing him for participating in the civil

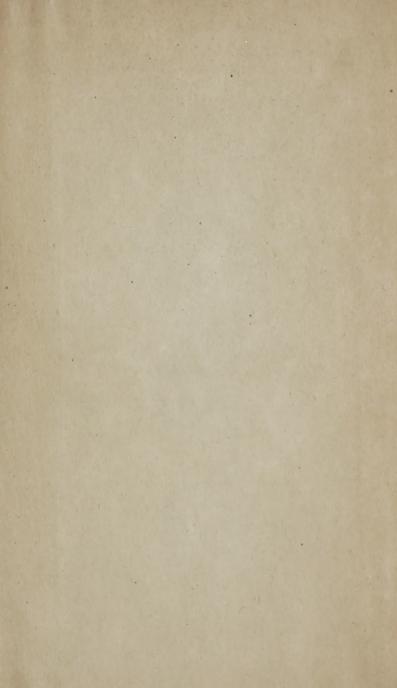
rights and privileges of a subject of the British king; and above all, of affording him facilities of hearing the message of peace and salvation through Jesus Christ; and of worshipping aright that God and Saviour, who hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth.

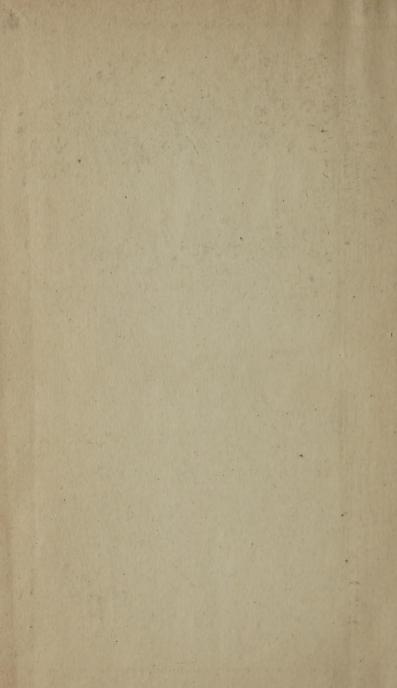
Subscriptions and Donations, in aid of the objects of the Society, will be received by the President, Treasurer, and Secretary, as well as by the members of the Committee.



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